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ANNUAL REPORT

ON

LABOUR IMMIGRATION INTO ASSAM

FOR THE

Year 1881.

SHILLONG:
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FROM C. J. LYALL, ESQ., C.I.E.,

Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT.

Dated Shillong, the 28th August 1882.

SIR,

I AM directed to submit the Report on Labour Immigration into Assam for the year 1881. The delay in the preparation of the Report is again due to the omission of the Deputy-Commissioner of Kámrúp to submit his returns till long after the due date: an omission which is attributed by him to the sudden death of the clerk in charge of the work in his office.

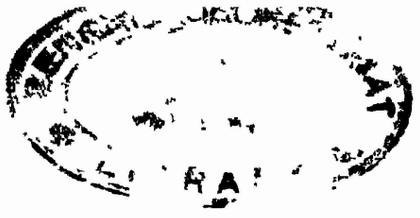
The Report follows the form adopted in that for 1880.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam.



REPORT ON LABOUR IMMIGRATION INTO ASSAM FOR THE YEAR 1881.

CHAPTER I.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.

SECTION I.—IMPORTATION AND JOURNEY TO DESTINATION.

Repeal of Act VII (B C) of 1873.

The year 1881 was the last during which Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 was in operation. The new Act, I. of 1882, received the assent of His Excellency the Governor-General on the 6th January last; and thus from the beginning of the present year labour immigration into this Province has been governed by its provisions.

The changes wrought by the new Act will most fitly be noticed in detail in the report for 1882, when some experience has been gained of its working; but a few words dealing with the history and progress of immigration under the law in force from 1874 to 1881 will not be out of place in this report.

Objects of Act VII.

2. Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 was passed in the expectation that it would give a great impetus to free immigration, and that such immigration would gradually establish itself and eventually render the existence of a special law unnecessary. Among the changes made by the Act which were looked upon as most important were those by which time-expired labourers were, on re-engagement, freed from the ordinary provisions of the law, and by which a new class of free labourers, those under contract for a term not exceeding one year, was recognised. The collection of labourers by means of garden-sardars, without the intervention of contractors, was provided for; and the opportunity was taken, in amending the law, to render more definite than before the provisions regarding the closing of gardens declared unfit for the habitation of labourers. The expectations based upon the encouragement given by the Act to free immigration were, however, mainly dependent for their realisation upon increased facilities to be given for reaching the labour districts by means of improved roads, shorter passages, and the like. And the passing of the Act was synchronous with the establishment of a through line of road from the great recruiting districts of Behar and Sonthália to Dhubri on the Brahmaputra.

Improvement of communications with the Assam Valley.

3. Great progress has been accomplished in the improvement of the means of communication with the Assam Valley in the eight years since the Act was passed. Dhubri has year by year been the starting point for the river journey to an increasing proportion of immigrants. The road projected by Sir George Campbell, however, and partly constructed during the last year of his government by means of famine labour, has, owing to the opening of the Northern Bengal Railway, whereby a continuous line of steam communication with Calcutta has been brought almost to the gates of the Province, gradually ceased to be used by marching parties. But this change of route does not ordinarily involve a visit to Calcutta, where residence in the depôts has long been recognised as eminently dangerous to the health of the coolies. Intending emigrants from the great fields of Chota Nagpur and the Sonthal country make their way by the East Indian Railway to Hooghly, and, there crossing the river, take train at Kánchrapára for their journey northwards to Dhubri. The details of the immigration through Dhubri during the past year, shortly to be given, will show how largely this route is resorted to, and with what good effects in securing the safe arrival of the labourers in the Province with a minimum of danger from disease, desertion, and other losses of travel.

The subject of facilitating the progress of the immigrants up the Brahmaputra by the establishment of a swift steamer service on that river has been under consideration almost continuously since 1874. The Chief Commissioner is glad to be able to announce that arrangements for the starting of a daily service have now been almost completed, and that it may be expected to commence working about May next.

4. While, however, the objects of Sir George Campbell have been successfully followed out in regard to the largest field of employment for imported labour, the districts of the Assam Valley, it cannot be said that much has been done to improve the means of access to the tea districts of Sylhet and Cachar. Here, as before the passing of Act VII. of 1873, the immigration is wholly by native boat. The network of great rivers which lies at the exit of this valley prohibits travel by land; and the shallowness of the river channels in the cold weather prevents steamers from reaching more than half-way up Sylhet at that season, which is the one when coolies usually travel. The extension of road-making in this direction is still extremely slow, and the railway projects which may one day provide as speedy an access to Sylhet and Cachar as is afforded by the Northern Bengal Railway to Dhubri, are still awaiting the solution of difficulties which must be conquered before they are started.

With the Surma Valley.

5. It must be admitted that, as respects free immigration, matters stand now very much as they did when the Act of 1873 was passed. Sylhet was then, as now, at the head of the labour districts in which unaided importation supplied any considerable portion of the labour force: in others the proportion of adults immigrating otherwise than under the Act is but small.

Free immigration

6. The use of garden-sardars as a recruiting agency has largely extended, and it is generally admitted that the coolies so obtained are far preferable to those supplied by contractors But the expense and risk of deputing a coolie sardar from a remote district in Assam to gather labourers in the neighbourhood of his home have of late years apparently checked recourse to this agency; and the provisions of Act VII. of 1873, which required sardars engaging more than 20 labourers to conform to the rules regarding recruiters, have brought them in contact with contractors, and exposed the emigrants gathered together at the expense of the tea-planter to the danger of being inveigled by the keeper of the depôt into concluding new engagements through himself.

Garden sardars

This has now been remedied by the new Act, which has prohibited a sardar from taking his coolies to a contractor's depôt. The restriction upon the number of coolies whom he is entitled to recruit has been removed; and a great benefit has been conferred on employers by providing for the establishment in the recruiting districts of local agents, to whom the sardar is to report himself, and by whom he will be supplied with funds. In this way the risk of embezzlement has been greatly reduced, and the sardar will no longer be exposed to temptation by the possession of large sums committed to his care for the purpose of procuring recruits.

7. The following is a comparative table of the number of immigrants imported during the years 1874—1881, while Act VII. of 1873 was in force:—

Details of immigration under Act VII.

		1881	1880.	1879	1878.	1877	1876	1875	1874
Act VII.	Garden-sardars	6,630	7,414	11,161	19,972	14,382	12,309	21,253	19,394
	Contractors ...	5,543	3,381	4,458	7,390	8,286	7,504		
Non-Act	Adults	2,375	2,046	2,667	4,827	3,095	7,562	4,374	2,894
	Children	1,981	2,229	4,541	8,299	4,760	4,349	2,746	
	Infants	587	843	1,885	2,573	1,374	2,559	1,278	
	Total...	17,116	15,913	24,712	43,061	31,897	34,283	29,651	22,288

The returns for 1874 and 1875 were submitted in the old forms, hence detailed information cannot be given.

The largest importations were in 1878, and their numbers were perhaps due to the scarcity in Northern India which prevailed in that year; a similar increase is noticeable in 1875 and 1876, probably to be ascribed to a like cause.

8. In the eight years 218,921 persons immigrated into Assam; of these 149,077 were immigrants under Act VII. and 40,004 were children, generally those of the Act immigrants; 26,946 were adults, who immigrated without the assistance of the Act; and 2,894 were persons whom it is now impossible to separate into adults not under the Act and children, of which classes the total is made up. A certain, but not a large, proportion of th aged dependants of labourers under the Act; but, taking all those be really free labourers, and adding half the number who imm under the Act in 1874, out of a total adult immigrant population of 16 per cent., were free labourers, the class whom it was Sir George to encourage. The largest proportion of such labourers ever attained was in 1876, 27·6 per cent., the smallest in 1877, 12 per cent., since which year it has again gradually risen, and stood in 1881 at 16 per cent.

Proportion of free labourers.

Proportion of sardari coolies

9. Of the Act coolies imported since 1875 (in which year and in 1874 no distinction was made in the returns between sardari and contractors' coolies) 108,430 in number, 71,868, or almost exactly two-thirds, were recruited by garden-sardars, and the remaining one-third, or 36,562, by contractors. The following are the proportions for each of the six years :—

Year	Sardari coolies	Contractors' coolies	Year.	Sardari coolies	Contractors' coolies
1876	62·1	37 9	1879	71·4	28·6
1877	63·4	36·6	1880	68 6	31·4
1878	72·9	27·1	1881	54 4	45 6

The highest proportion, it will be seen, was reached in 1878, since which year there has been a gradual decline in the use of this agency.

Protective measures in the Province

10. As regards the protective measures within the Province, to which, as has been mentioned, it was intended that the Act should give more complete effect by defining more strictly the conditions under which a garden might be closed as unfit for the residence of imported labourers, it was found before the new law had been long at work that, by omitting to distinguish between different classes of labourers, some of whom might be able to stand a climate which might be fatal to others, its provisions on this subject were almost a dead letter. By Section 119 the action to be taken was only possible if the mortality among the labourers on an estate, counting both labourers under the Act and others, exceeded 7 per cent. But it was but rarely that this condition was fulfilled in regard to all the labourers on an estate taken together, though it has unhappily not unfrequently been the case that the mortality among unacclimatised coolies, or among certain classes of imported coolies, such as those from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, has, taken separately, largely exceeded the rate mentioned.

Accordingly, it became necessary to supplement Chapter 13 of the Act by fresh legislation, enabling the Chief Commissioner to apply specially its provisions to labourers of any particular class, or to labourers imported from any particular place or district, and to close a garden, not to imported labour as a whole, but to the class which was found to suffer. This power was given by Assam Regulation IV. of 1877, since when several cases have arisen in which its provisions have been applied with beneficial results.

Time-expired coolies

11. It may be doubted whether the change to which the Government of Bengal attributed much importance, by which time-expired labourers were on re-engagement freed from the provisions of the law attaching to contract immigrants, really did much to modify the position of the former. As it has always been customary to give such labourers, on re-engagement, a bonus as an advance or earnest of the engagement, Act XIII. of 1859 has been held applicable to such contracts, and the breach of them still entails penal consequences. In the new law, therefore, it has been enacted that contracts under the Act may be entered into in the labour districts, and that such contracts shall have the same force as those made by intending emigrants.

Administration of Act during the year

12. Turning now to the history of the year 1881, the Chief Commissioner has to record no new administrative measures of any great importance. The discussion of the new law, which it is unnecessary to notice further here, was the chief subject of attention on the part of the Government and the planting community. The opportunity given for considering the Bill was not as ample as the Chief Commissioner could have wished; it was not received for criticism in the form in which it was introduced into the Legislative Council till the 10th October, and it was necessary to submit opinions on it before the end of November, the date fixed for its consideration by the Council. It was thus impossible to consult in regard to its provisions many of the unofficial community, and it is to be feared that some defects, caused by ignorance of local conditions, may hereafter disclose themselves. One such defect has already been brought to the notice of the Government of India, with a view to a remedy being applied.

Immigration through Dhubri

13. The period of report on immigration through Dhubri, which was heretofore the financial, has been changed to the calendar year, in order to bring its details into conformity with those of residence within the Province. This immigration has already been separately reviewed, and the report submitted to the Government of India: but it will be convenient to summarise here its chief features, in order to complete this report. The total number of immigrants into the Assam Valley Districts who started for the Province was 11,696, being 701 more than in 1880-81: of these, 8,695 came by the Dhubri route, and 3,001 embarked at Goalundo, giving a proportion of 74·34 per cent. who used the former, against 68·4 per cent. in the

previous year. This mode of travelling to Assam is thus year by year gaining in popularity. Of the 8,695 immigrants who started, 8,482 actually arrived at Dhubri, having lost 20 by death on the way, 129 by desertion, and 64 who were detained by sickness. Out of the 8,482, only 15 chose the old Rájmahál route *viâ* Malda, Dinajpur, and Rangpur; the rest took the rail to Kurigrám, and either marched thence to Dhubri or came by steamer.

Journey from Dhubri upwards

14. In depôt at Dhubri 7 deaths occurred among 8,484 persons (including 2 births), and 62 other casualties. 8,416 persons left for the labour districts, of whom 5,994 were labourers under contract, 799 adult dependants, 1,159 children, and 464 infants. All but 204 of these travelled by steamer, the rest marching. The losses by death were 7, as just stated, in depôt, 14 on board the steamers, and 3 among those who chose the land route. This proportion of casualties, though not quite so small as in 1880-81, is still extremely moderate.

The arrangements made for the food and comfort of the immigrants at the depôts and on the steamers are reported to have been good, and were inspected and approved both by the Commissioner and the Chief Commissioner. Some defects in the well at the depôts were pointed out by the Sanitary Commissioner, and are now being remedied.

Immigration *viâ* Goalundo into the Assam Valley

15. 3,001 coolies were embarked at Goalundo for the Assam Valley Districts: of these the Chief Commissioner has not yet received any particulars from the Superintendent of Labour Transport at Calcutta.

Free immigration *viâ* Dhubri

16. Besides these contract labourers and their dependants, 811 free labourers passed through the Dhubri depôts on their way to the labour districts. These were either under no agreement at all, or else had given one year's agreement under the ordinary contract law 214 persons were also enumerated as having crossed into Assam by the Dhubri ferry in search of employment on tea-gardens, independently of any recruiting or forwarding agency.

Immigration into Sylhet

17. In the Surma Valley the route chosen by immigrants is the Eastern Bengal Railway to Goalundo, whence they proceed to their destination by native boat. The journey from Goalundo to gardens in Sylhet occupied from 11 to 33 days, or 21 days on an average. The deaths among the Act coolies on their way to this district were 6 in number, or 73 per cent. No particulars are available of casualties among non-Act coolies. The registration of coolies at Bhairab Bázár was not more successful this year than last, only 506 persons having been returned as passing that station upwards, while the number shown by tea-planters as imported is 1,855.

and into Cachar.

18. 101 batches of contractors' coolies left Goalundo for Cachar, and 95 batches of sardari coolies also proceeded to that district. The shortest time occupied by the former in reaching their destination was 19 days, the longest 38 days, and the average 26. In the case of the sardari coolies the time taken is counted from the day they left their homes : the shortest time was 20 days, and the longest 56, the average being 32. 50 deaths occurred on the journey, and 18 in hospital before reaching the gardens, giving a percentage of mortality of 2·4, against 3·37 in 1880 and 3·23 in 1879. 43 deaths were among Act and 25 among non-Act coolies. Of the 68 deaths, 58 were due to cholera, 2 to dysentery, 3 to fever, and 5 to other diseases; and 52 occurred among Chota Nagpur coolies, 8 among those from the North-Western Provinces, and 8 among Bengalis. The first class suffered from a mortality on the voyage six times greater than the two others. This greater susceptibility to bowel-disease on the journey is a marked feature of coolies from Chota Nagpur, and is ascribed by the Deputy-Commissioner to their want of discrimination in their diet. It was only among coolies despatched to Cachar that any considerable mortality occurred on the journey between their homes and this Province.

Section II —Relating to Returns and Inspection of Tea-Gardens.

Forms of returns

19. The returns upon which this report is based are the same as those used in preparing former reports. The attempt to obtain nominal lists of labourers month by month, referred to in paragraph 13 of the report for 1879, has not been persevered with. The object of this system was to obtain a more accurate basis for the calculation of rates of mortality and desertion than is afforded by the present returns, which give the strength only at three dates in the year,—the beginning, middle, and end. In the case of jails and other fluctuating aggregates of men kept continually under observation, it is possible to record the strength day by day, and thus to obtain an average upon which rates of mortality, sickness, &c., can be calculated for comparative purposes with a close approach

to absolute accuracy. But when, as on a tea-garden, the population is constantly shifting, by the introduction of fresh labourers, and the expiry of the contracts of others, by deaths and desertions, by births and the passing of individuals from the class of infants to that of children, from that of children to that of adults, &c., it is obvious that the strength recorded on only three dates in the year, and the average struck on these data, are not, for comparative purposes, of equal value with those which Government can obtain in jails, regiments, and the like. The endeavour made in 1879 and 1880 had for its object to remedy this defect by obtaining for the Inspectors' offices a complete transcript of the nominal registers maintained on each tea-garden, from which the state of the population on each could be ascertained for each day in the year, and the average yearly strength calculated from these data. But the experiment was confined to a few planters who had consented to submit such returns : their great bulk and the labour involved in copying them gradually caused their submission to be discontinued, and during the past year nothing more has been heard of them. It is not probable that under the new Act the forms of returns hitherto submitted will be materially modified: managers have now became familiar with them, and they are submitted generally with punctuality and correctly filled in; any new forms which might be prescribed would probably give rise to frequent difficulties and mistakes for some time after their introduction ; and if those now in use are defective in affording an absolute standard, they at any rate supply a basis for enquiry, if not for immediate action.

Submission of returns.

20. Returns were submitted in 1881 by all tea-gardens in Sylhet (where last year several gardens omitted to do so), Cachar, Kámrúp (except those not employing contract labour under the Act), Darrang, Nowgong, and Sibságar. In Kámrúp, while there are only seven gardens on which Act coolies are employed, there are 138 not employing Act labour, and from most, if not all, of these no returns were received. It is, however, to be observed that the 138 so-called gardens have grown out of 96 shown for 1880, by the addition of one which in the latter year employed Act labour, and 31 petty patches of tea-cultivation not before registered as gardens, in which the land is held on annual *patta*. In 10 cases the Deputy-Commissioner has broken up one garden into two, by recording as separate gardens the areas held on different tenures. This was unnecessary, and due to a misunderstanding of the orders given.

In Lakhimpur the Deputy-Commissioner reports that 47 gardens sent in no returns at all, and nothing is known of them ; but he considers it probable that many of them are out-gardens, whose returns have really been incorporated in the 134 returns received. 42 gardens in this district which do not employ Act coolies reported the fact, and submitted no returns. The Chief Commissioner has issued instructions to the Deputy-Commissioner, which will, he hopes, secure more accurate statistics in future. Under the new Act the obligation to submit returns, which under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 existed only where Act coolies were employed, attaches to every "estate" as defined in Section 3 of Act I. of 1882 : that is, every piece of land "upon which any labourers or more than 50 other persons have been engaged to labour." The want of accurate information from this district is the chief defect in the year's returns.

Inspection of tea-gardens.

21. The statement below shows the number of gardens employing Act-VII. coolies and those on which no Act-VII. coolies were employed, and the number of gardens employing these classes of coolies which were visited once, twice, or thrice in the years 1880 and 1881, respectively :—

Name of district.	Number of existing tea gardens.						Number of tea gardens visited once only in the year						Number of tea gardens visited twice in the year.					
	Tea-gardens employing Act-VII. labourers, either exclusive of, or together with, other labourers.		Tea gardens not employing Act-VII. labourers.		Total		Tea-gardens employing Act VII labourers, either exclusive of, or together with, other labourers.		Tea-gardens not employing Act-VII. labourers.		Total.		Tea-gardens employing Act VII labourers, either exclusive of, or together with, other labourers		Tea gardens not employing Act-VII. labourers.		Total	
	1881.	1880	1881	1880	1881	1880	1881	1880.	1881.	1880	1881	1880	1881.	1880	1881	1880	1881	1880.
Sylhet	54	50	37	41	91*	91	36	25	5	4	41	29	6	13	...	1	6	14
Cachar	101	100	80	84	181	184	88	84	39	29	127	113	8	11		2	8	13
Kámrúp	7	6	138	96	145	104	5	8	1	.	6	8	2	...	....	....	.	.
Darrang	66	64	56	60	122	124		8	.	.	...	8	61	60	..	..	65	60
Nowgong	36	33	34	44	70†	77	3	30	4	...	7	30	33	3		....	33	3
Sibságar	146	147	107	117	253‡	264	17	102	7	20	64	122	10	37		1	10	38
Lakhimpur	138	130	70	81	208§	211	07	94	13	26	110	120	29	15	1	1	30	16
Total .	548	532	522	523	1,070	1,055	288	346	69	79	355	425	153	139	1	5	154	144

* Excluding "Dona," which submits returns to the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, and including 5 gardens situated in the Khasi Hills district but inspected by, and submitting returns to, the Sylhet inspectors.
† Six gardens were closed and one garden was amalgamated with another.
‡ Including 18 coolie depots and 7 gardens not under culture. § Including 8 coolie depôts.

Name of districts.	Number of tea-gardens visited thrice in the year.						Number of tea gardens not visited during the year					
	Tea gardens employing Act-VII labourers, either exclusive of, or together with, other labourers		Tea gardens not employing Act-VII. labourers.		Total.		Tea-gardens employing Act-VII. labourers, either exclusive of, or together with, other labourers.		Tea gardens not employing Act-VII. labourers.		Total	
	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.
Sylhet	3	2	....	....	3	2	9	10	32	36	41	46
Cachar	....	2	....	1	....	3	5	3	41	52	46	55
Kámrúp	....	....	....	.. .	....	....	....	.. .	137	96	137	96
Darrang	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1	59	60	57	61
Nowgong	....	....	....	....	....	.. .	....	....	30	44	30	44
Sibságar	1	3	....	....	1	3	78	5	100	96	178	101
Lakhimpur	1	5	1	..	2	5	11	16	55	54	66	70
Total	5	12	1	1	6	13	104	35	451	438	555	473

It will be seen that the number of gardens employing Act-VII. coolies has increased from 532 to 548: 286 of this class of gardens were visited once, 153 were visited twice and 5 were visited thrice, against 346, 139, and 12 respectively in 1880.

The gardens which do not employ Act-VII. coolies show a slight decrease, being 522 against 523 in 1880. Out of this class of gardens 69 were visited once, one garden was visited twice, and another was visited thrice, against 79, 5, and 1 in 1880.

The total number of gardens increased from 1,055 to 1,070. The increase is due, as has already been explained, to the re-classification of gardens in the district of Kámrúp, and to the fact that some gardens in that district which were not registered before have been included for the first time.

Falling off in inspection done.

22. The record of inspection done during the year shows that the work was less thoroughly performed than in 1880. Of gardens employing Act-VII. coolies, 548 in all, only 444 were visited, while in the previous year 497 out of 532 were inspected. This falling off, however, is confined to one district. In Kámrúp and Nowgong, all the Act gardens were inspected; in Darrang only one out of 66 was omitted. In Sylhet, of the 9 gardens not inspected in 1881, 4 were visited just before the close of 1880, and 3 just after the commencement of 1882. In Cachar, though 5 gardens are shown as not inspected, one is known to have been visited by the late Major Boyd, and two others, in the Hailákándi sub-division, were, it is believed, inspected by Mr. Place, though the inspection memoranda cannot be found.

The district of Sibságar, which contains the largest number of tea-gardens in the Province, shows proportionally the least inspection: out of 146 gardens employing Act coolies 78 were left unvisited in 1881, against 5 out of 147 in 1880. The Deputy-Commissioner ascribes the falling off to the absence on furlough of the Inspector of Labourers in Upper Assam, and holds that the orders given in 1879, directing the District and Sub-divisional Officers to inspect concurrently with Dr. Partridge, merely meant that the District Officers were to assist the Inspector, not to do the whole work themselves. Colonel Campbell, however, overlooks the orders issued when Dr. Partridge went on furlough, directing him to arrange through his district staff for the duty of inspection; and the statement given below, showing how the duty was performed in each sub-division, does not exhibit a proper activity on the part of the Sub-divisional Officers of Jorhat and Golághát:—

Sub-division.	Number of gardens employing Act coolies.	Number inspected.	Number not inspected.
Head-quarters	52	46	6
Jorhát	57	17	40
Golághát	37	5	32

The Sub-divisional Officer of Golághát had, it is true, duties to perform at his head-quarters in connection with the transport of supplies to the Nága Hills, which claimed his chief attention; but the Chief Commissioner thinks that, even with these, he might have accomplished more than the inspection of only 5 gardens out of 37.

CHAPTER II.—General Statistics.

Section I.—Importations.

General statistics of importation.

23. The total number of labourers and their dependants imported into the Province during 1881 was 17,116, or more by 1,203 than in the previous year. The increase is small, only 7·5 per cent.: but if the details be examined, it will be seen that, while the number of children and infants imported has fallen off by 504, or 16·4 per cent., the number of adults, whether introduced under the Act or not, has risen from 12,841 in 1880 to 14,548 in 1881, or by 13·2 per cent. There has thus been a partial recovery in immigration, which may be taken to be a sign of greater prosperity in the tea industry.

The statement below compares the importations of the last five years under each head :—

		1881.	1880.	1879.	1878.	1877.
Act-VII. ...	Garden-sardars ...	6,630	7,414	11,161	19,972	14,382
	Contractors	5,543	3,381	4,458	7,390	8,286
Non-Act ...	Adults.....	2,375	2,046	2,667	4,827	3,095
	Children	1,981	2,229	4,541	8,299	4,760
	Infants	587	843	1,885	2,573	1,374
	Total.....	17,116	15,913	24,712	43,061	31,897

The total importations, it will be seen, still fall far short of those of 1878.

Importations district by district.

24. The following table shows the importations, compared with 1880, district by district:—

District.	Act VII.		Non-Act. Adults.		Children.		Infants.		Total.	
	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.
Sylhet	809	568	845	485	178	173	23	37	1,855	1,263
Cachar.....	1,986	1,526	454	411	252	456	75	116	2,767	2,509
Kámrúp	33	48	90	68	46	43	7	19	176	178
Darrang	1,227	1,315	96	60	228	178	105	110	1,656	1,663
Nowgong	822	652	97	185	175	164	72	101	1,166	1,102
Sibságar	3,157	3,042	439	535	533	484	169	276	4,298	4,337
Lakhimpur.....	4,139	3,644	354	302	569	731	136	184	5,198	4,861
Total	12,173	10,795	2,375	2,046	1,981	2,229	587	843	17,116	15,913

The districts included in this statement maintain the same relative order as last year in respect of the numbers imported ; but it will be seen that the increase in importations is confined to the districts of Sylhet, Lakhimpur, Cachar, and Nowgong, the three others showing a slight decrease.

25. The comparative statement below shows for the two past years the localities from which the adult coolies were imported, and the manner in which they were recruited, whether under the Act or not, or by contractors or garden-sardars:—

Localities from which imported.

Nationality.		Act VII.				Non Act.		Total.	
		Garden sardars.		Contractors.					
		1881.	1880	1881	1880.	1881	1880	1881	1880.
Bengal ...	Men	609	487	958	681	223	320	1,790	1,488
	Women	515	434	757	554	239	249	1 511	1,237
	Total ..	1,124	921	1,715	1,235	462	769	3 301	2,725
North-Western Provinces.	Men	918	667	1,162	613	738	276	2,818	1,556
	Women	558	505	387	234	402	228	1,347	967
	Total ...	1,476	1,172	1,549	847	1,140	504	4,165	2,523
Chota Nagpur.	Men	2,431	3,080	1,201	842	288	502	3,920	4,424
	Women	1,567	2,237	601	425	291	463	2,459	3,125
	Total ..	3,998	5,317	1,802	1,267	579	965	6,379	7,549
Nepal ...	Men	.....	3	388	10	177	.....	565	13
	Women	.....	.....	26	.....	16	.....	42	... ..
	Total ...	.....	3	414	10	193	.....	607	13
Madras ...	Men	.....	1	44	17	.....	3	44	21
	Women	.....	.....	19	5	1	5	20	10
	Total ...	.....	1	63	22	1	8	64	31
Bombay ...	Men	32	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	32	.....
	Women	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.. ...	.....
	Total ...	32	... ..	.....	.....	.. ...	.....	32	.....
Total ...	Men	3,990	4,238	3,753	2,163	1,426	1,101	9,169	7,502
	Women	2,640	3,176	1,790	1,218	949	945	5,379	5,339
	Grand Total ...	6,630	7,414	5,543	3,381	2,375	2,046	14,548	12,841

The chief features of this statement are the very large increase among labourers imported from the North-Western Provinces, Behar, and Oudh (1,642, or 65 08 per cent.); the falling off in importations from Chota Nagpur (1,170, or 15·5 per cent.); the introduction for the first time of a considerable body of labourers, 607 in number, from Nepal; the diminished proportion of the coolies imported under the Act who were recruited by garden-sardars (6,630 out of 12,173, or 54·4 per cent., against 7,414 out of 10,795, or 68·6 per cent.); and the decrease in the ratio of women to men imported from 71·1 to 100 to 58·6 to 100.

It must be explained that these returns are compiled from figures furnished by the tea-planters, and not from those submitted by the Superintendent of Emigration at Calcutta. The former classify the coolies generally according to their race; the latter according to the place of recruitment. There are thus frequently great discrepancies between the two; and last year the Government of Bengal, in reviewing the report of the Superintendent of Emigration, where comparatively few emigrants from Chota Nagpur (that is, persons actually recruited there) were shown, expressed the opinion that this field was almost exhausted for recruiting purposes How far this is from being the case is shown by the fact that of a total importation of 12,841 adults in 1880, 7,549 souls, or 58·8 per cent., came from these districts, and if in 1881 the proportion is considerably less, they still account for 43·8 of the importations.

The heading "Bengalis," which shows an increase of 21 per cent. as compared with 1880, is somewhat indefinite; and, although the returns to be filled in by the planters contain clear instructions as to the districts comprising each area of recruitment, it is probable that many of the persons entered under this head are really Hindustanis recruited in Calcutta or its neighbourhood, or labourers from Chota Nagpur or Sonthalia (currently known in Calcutta as Dángars), who have come there in search of employment, and not really people whose mother-tongue is Bengali. The importations from Nepal were almost confined to the two districts of Sibságar and Lakhimpur, the former of

which imported 421 labourers, all but a few under the Act, and the latter 179, all as free immigrants.

Recruitment through garden-sardars.

26. The decrease in the proportion of coolies recruited by garden-sardars to those obtained from contractors is very marked, and is a matter for regret. The largest proportional immigration of sardari coolies during the last five years occurred in 1878, when 72·9 per cent. of the total importations under the Act were so obtained. Since then the proportion has gradually diminished to 71·4 per cent. in 1879, 68·6 in 1880, and 54 4 per cent. in the past year. The probable cause of the disuse of this agency is the want of any means of controlling the proceedings of the sardars after their despatch from the garden to the recruiting-grounds. The provisions of the new Act (Sections 59-64) which enable the employer to appoint a local agent to represent him in the recruiting districts, and to see that the sardar does not embezzle the funds with which he has been entrusted, will, the Chief Commissioner hopes, cause resort to this agency to become again more common. There can be no doubt that coolies imported by the aid of sardars are decidedly superior to the miscellaneous lot sent up by a contractor. The former are personally conducted by a leader who is acquainted with the route, and able to instruct them in adapting themselves to their new conditions. They are, moreover, generally known one to the other, and often belong to the family or the village of the sardar. The latter are picked up from various quarters, and may never have seen one another till they meet in the contractor's depôt. They arrive in the Province friendless and without guidance, and too often fall victims to their ignorance of the precautions which should be taken to preserve health, to home-sickness, and to their isolation away from their caste-fellows in some garden remote from the district head-quarters.

Distribution of contractors and sardari coolies.

27. Generally speaking, it is the remoter districts which import contractors' coolies, while those nearer to Bengal are able to supply their wants by sardari recruiting, as will be manifest from the figures below:—

Percentage of Act-VII. coolies imported in 1881.

	Through garden-sardars.	Through contractors.
Kámrúp	100	Nil.
Darrang	82·4	17·6
Nowgong	68 7	31·3
Sylhet	67·6	32·4
Sibságar	52·7	47·3
Cachar	50·9	49·1
Lakhimpur	43·3	56·7

It is in Cachar, Sibságar, and Lakhimpur that employers have in 1881 resorted more largely than in 1880 to contractors for their labour supply; and in the two latter districts the effects are seen in the high mortality which prevailed, not indeed generally, but on certain gardens which obtained their coolies in this manner.

Diminished proportion of women.

28. The diminished proportion of women is mainly due to the greater resort to contractors. In 1880, of the sardari coolies 42·8 per cent. were women, of the contractors' coolies only 36 per cent. In 1881 the percentage of women among sardari labourers was 39·8, among contractors 32·3. The proportions of the sexes are most nearly equal among the importations from Bengal, 84·4 women to 100 men; among those from Chota Nagpur the proportion was 62·7 women to 100 men; among those from the North-Western Provinces it was 48·5 women to 100 men. The 607 Nepalis had only 42 women among them, while the 32 immigrants from Bombay (who all went to the Cachar district) had none.

Non-Act immigrants.

29. The non-Act immigrants consist partly of the dependants of those who immigrated under the Act, and partly of persons who came into the Province to labour without a contract entered into under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873. Most of the adults are of the latter class, though a few (who are not distinguished in the returns) may be aged relatives of Act labourers: most of the children and infants are of the former.

Children imported.

30. Under children and infants there was a great diminution: this must partly be attributed, like the diminished proportion of women, to the increased resort to contractors. The women supplied by this agency seldom have their children with them, while those brought up by garden-sardars more frequently come to the Province with their families.

Non Act adults

31. The importations of non-Act adults increased by 329, or 16 per cent. With the exception of the importation of Nepalis, already noticed, this increase is confined to coolies from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, of whom more than twice as many immigrated in 1881 as in 1880, 1,140 against 504. On the other hand, free immigration from Bengal fell off by 18 per cent. and from Chota Nagpur by 40 per cent. These variations are not explained by the District Officers.

It is in Sylhet, as will be seen from the table in paragraph 24 above, that free immigration is most important. Except Kámrúp (where immigration, free or contract, is insignificant), that district shows by far the largest proportion of immigration otherwise than under the Act, more than half the additions to its labour force in 1881 having been thus obtained. In the other districts the variation in numbers is unimportant.

Section II.—Statistics of the Labour Force in the Province.

Total labour force

32. The following table shows the changes which have taken place in the tea-garden population of the Province during the year:—

Number remaining at end of 1880			189,028†
Add new importations			17,116
Transfers from other gardens			6,063
Otherwise added			57,984
Total			270,191
Deduct—			
Deaths	6,171		
Desertions	4,655		
Otherwise	63,937		
		74,763	
Balance at end of 1881			195,428

† The discrepancy between this total and the figure shown in last year's report (187,300) is due to Sylhet where some tea gardens which did not submit returns for the previous year have submitted returns this year, and to Nowgong, where the manager of the New Salona tea garden has corrected his figures for 1880

It was explained in last year's report that the figures shown as "otherwise added" generally represent labourers whose contracts have expired and who re-engage, or who desert and, escaping recapture, take fresh service, at a distance from their former district or garden; while "Transfers from other gardens" show labourers who have been transferred from one garden to another during the period of their contract, or whose previous service was in the same locality as that for which they re-engage. Consequently, if the bulk of the immigrants (as they are known to do) remain in the Province, and continue to work as tea-coolies after leaving their first service, the total of "Transfers from other gardens" and "Otherwise added" among the additions should approximately be equal to the heading "Otherwise deducted" among the deductions; and this is actually found to be the case in the statement above. The total of the two former entries is 64,047, while that of the latter is 63,937, giving a difference in favour of the additions of 110 only. The total of the deserters is 4,655, many of whom, beyond all doubt, found employment after eluding pursuit. If from this total be deducted the 110 shown as "Otherwise added," there remain 4.545 persons as representing the deduction from the labour force of the Province during the year caused otherwise than by death. These people would appear either to have returned to their homes, or settled down in the Province as cultivators or in some employment unconnected with the tea industry.

Causes of inaccuracy in these figures

33. At the same time, it is not safe to argue very strictly upon these figures. They are always liable to be affected by the omission of planters (as during the present year in the Lakhimpur district and last year in Sylhet) to submit returns. By Act VII (B C.) of 1873, gardens employing no labourers under the Act were not bound to submit statistics of their labour force. So much of the total strength shown as represents labourers not engaged under the Act, therefore, appertains either to gardens where the coolie population consists partly of Act and partly of non-Act labourers (which come under the obligations of Section 100 of the Act), or to gardens where no Act coolies are employed, but the managers of which have responded to the request of the District Officers for returns. The gardens which employed no Act labourers and submitted no returns are not included, and much of the balance of deductions unaccounted for must no doubt represent coolies who found employment on these gardens, and were therefore not really a loss to the tea interest as a whole. By the definition of "estate" in Section 3 of Act I. of 1882, which makes

gardens liable to submit returns even though not employing Act coolies, if the number of employés exceeds 50, it will be possible in future to obtain statistics of much of this balance, and the figures contained in these reports will, it is hoped, gain in exactness.

The figures above, taken for what they are worth, show an increase in the total labour force at the end compared with that at the beginning of the year of 6,400, or 3·3 per cent.

Comparison of labour force for three years.

34. The table below shows the total labour force at the beginning and end of the last three years, and also the mean strength for the two half years of 1881. The returns received from tea-gardens are rendered on the 1st January and 1st July of each year, and upon the average, of each half-yearly period, struck by adding together the figures at its beginning and end, and dividing by two, the rates of mortality and desertion for each half year are calculated. The sum of these rates forms the rate for the year. It was explained in last year's report that this is the only feasible method of approximating to the true rates, as it is impossible to obtain either very numerous or very elaborate returns from the managers of tea-gardens.

Classes of labourers.		1st January 1879.	1st January 1880.	1st January 1881.	1st July 1881.	Mean strength for first half year of 1881.	31st December 1881.	Mean strength for second half year of 1881.
Act-VII.	Adults	49,930	44,372	37,411†	31,042	34,226	28,257	29,649
Non-Act	Adults	70,865	76,941	84,335†	95,017	89,676	95,677	95,347
	Children	36,343	41,161	43,517†	45,248	44,382	44,882	45,065
	Infants.....	20,957	22,351	23,765†	24,830	24,297	26,612	25,721
	Total.....	178,095	184,825	189,028†	196,137	192,582	195,428	195,782

Act VII.	37,405	According to the returns for 31st December 1880. The difference is owing to Sylhet, where some of the tea-gardens which did not submit returns last year have submitted returns this year, and to Nowgong, where the manager of New Salona tea-garden has corrected his figures for 1880.
Non-Act Adults	83,115	
Non-Act Children	45,168	
Non-Act Infants	23,617	
Total	187,300	

From the above it will be seen that between the beginning and end of 1879, the increase was 6,730, or 3·7 per cent.; between the beginning and end of 1880 it was 4,203 or 2·2 per cent.; and between the beginning and end of 1881 it was 6,400, or 3·3 per cent. The increase, however, is confined in each year to non-Act adults and children, the number of contract adults showing a progressive diminution. This could not have been otherwise, when, as will be seen from the table in paragraph 23 above, the importations of 1878 were nearly double those of 1879, and nearly treble those of 1880.

The adult, that is, the effective, labour force was at the close of 1881 123,934 in number, against 121,746 at its beginning, showing an increase of 2,188, or 1·7 per cent.

Labour force by sex and nationality.

35. The statement below compares the adult labour force on the last day of 1881 with that at the end of 1880 as to sex and nationality. The adult force on the 31st December 1880 is here given as 120,520, as shown in last report, instead of, as it should be according to the corrected figures, 121,746, because it is now impossible to obtain revised details of nationality for the year 1880 from those gardens which failed to submit returns in that year, or submitted incorrect returns:—

Nationality.	Sex.	Act VII.		Non-Act.		Total.	
		1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.
Bengal ...	Men	3,518	4,265	17,435	17,411	20,953	21,676
	Women	3,365	4,281	15,097	15,291	18,462	19,572
North-Western Provinces.	Men	3,055	3,471	11,386	9,210	14,441	12,681
	Women	1,904	2,557	9,227	7,585	11,131	10,142
Chota Nagpur...	Men	9,227	12,582	22,701	17,434	31,928	30,016
	Women	6,691	10,100	19,248	15,556	25,939	25,656
Nepal ...	Men	378	7	117	18	495	25
	Women	25	.....	21	6	46	6
Madras ...	Men	38	89	270	366	308	455
	Women	24	53	172	233	196	286
Bombay ...	Men	32	.. ...	1	3	33	3
	Women	.....	.....	2	2	2	2
Total ...	Men ...	16,248	20,414	51,910	44,442	68,158	64,856
	Women ...	12,009	16,991	43,767	38,673	55,776	55,664
Grand Total		28,257	37,405	95,677	83,115	123,934	120,520

For the reason explained above, when discussing the nationality of the importations (paragraph 25 of this report), the classification of the coolies according to birthplace in this

statement is not altogether trustworthy; indeed, as the great majority of the population here shown are time-expired or free immigrants, whose distinctive nationality has been recorded in no official register, or has, in the course of their residence in the Province, become more or less obliterated, it is probable that errors of classification are even more numerous here than in the return of the races of coolies imported. It is most likely that the numbers shown under Bengal are swelled by persons who should properly be distributed over the North-Western Provinces or Chota Nagpur, since "Bengali coolie" is, in the *parlance* of the tea districts, a common name for all imported labourers. Taken for what they are worth, however, and neglecting the difference of 1,226 between the true total for 1880 and that here shown, which it is now impossible to distribute, the figures show that the increase in the adult labour force is almost confined to coolies from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar (2,749, or 12 per cent.) and from Chota Nagpur (2,195, or 3·9 per cent.). Under Bengal coolies there is a falling off of 1,833, or 4·4 per cent. According to this return, the adult labour force is at present composed as follows :—

From Bengal	31·81 per cent.
„ the North-Western Provinces, Behar, and Oudh	20·63 „ „
„ Chota Nagpur	46 70 „ „
„ Nepal	·43 „ „
„ Madras	·41 „ „
„ Bombay	·02 „ „
	100·00

Mean strength district by district.

36. The statement below shows for each class of persons in each district the mean strength of each half year, figures which are used in this report, as has been explained above, for the calculation of the half-yearly and annual percentages of mortality and desertion:—

Districts	Act VII		Non-Act Adults		Non-Act Children		Non-Act Infants		Total annual strength †		Whole year
	First half	Second half	First half	Second half	First half	Second half	First half	Second half	First half.	Second half	
Sylhet	1,488	1,328	13,998	14,736	4,257	4,488	2,224	2,469	21,968	23,021	22,494
Cachar	5,489	4,431	30,711	32,213	19,656	19,640	5,668	6,321	61,524	62,606	62,065
Kámrup	214	181	756	810	361	400	126	115	1,458	1,507	1,482
Darrang	4,624	4,144	5,808	6,050	2,215	2,261	1,987	2,060	14,634	14,516	14,575
Nowgong ...	2,285	2,090	2,009	2,290	1,223	1,275	565	629	6,083	6,286	6,184
Sibságar.....	9,918	8,401	22,609	24,023	9,859	10,102	8,955	9,169	51,343	51,695	51,519
Lakhimpur..	10,206	9,073	13,784	15,222	6,811	6,896	4,770	4,956	35,572	36,148	35,860
Total ...	34,226	29,649	89,676	95,347	44,382	45,065	24,297	25,721	192,582	195,782	194,181

† These are calculated on the total strength in the Province on the 1st January, 30th June, and 31st December, and do not agree exactly with the total strength of each class of labourers in calculating which fractions have been left out of consideration

Section III.—Desertions.

Number of desertions

37 The number of desertions of adults has fallen from 4,550 in 1880 to 4,087 in 1881, a decrease of 463, or 10·2 per cent. The percentage of desertions among all classes of adult labourers taken together was 3 28 upon the average yearly strength, against 3·70 in 1880. The number of desertions among Act coolies was 1,590, against 1,704 in 1880, giving a percentage of 5 00, against one of 4·14 in the latter year. Among non-Act adult coolies the number fell from 2,846 in 1880 to 2,497 in 1881, or from 3·48 to 2·71 per cent.

Desertions more common among Act coolies than non Act coolies.

38. The actual number of desertions among Act coolies is less than in 1880, though the proportion to the total population is higher among this class than among non-Act coolies. It has long been recognised that, as a general rule, desertions are most frequent amongst newly-arrived coolies, who suffer most from home-sickness and the depressing effects of a change of climate; and these causes, as already noticed, are most rife among contractors' coolies, who are bound together by fewer ties of family and acquaintanceship than those brought up by garden-sardars. On the total force there is a considerable improvement, which is no doubt connected with the increased healthiness of the year.

Desertions by sex and nationality.

39. The following statement shows the details of desertions according to nationality and sex:—

Nationality.	Sex.	Act-VII. Number of desertions. 1881.	Act-VII. 1880	Non-Act. Number of desertions. 1881.	Non-Act. 1880.	Total. 1881.	Total. 1880.	Percentage of desertions on annual strength among: Act VII. 1881.	Act VII. 1880.	Non-Act. 1881.	Non-Act. 1880.	Total. 1881.	Total. 1880.	Annual strength of adults of both Act and non-Act labourers. 1881.	1880.
Bengal	Men	275	277	460	557	735	834	7·14	6·09	2·62	3·17	2 80	2 96	40,339	42,278
	Women	88	95	307	321	395	416	2·41	2·01	2 01	2·07				
North-Western Provinces	Men	440	453	566	721	1,006	1,174	13 95	11·71	5·14	7 95	5 69	7·38	25,273	25,243
	Women	78	135	354	406	432	541	3·71	4 70	3·22	5·51				
Chota Nagpur	Men	566	582	402	509	1,058	1,091	5 80	4·22	2 37	3·02	2 58	2·67	58,981	56,492
	Women	139	149	299	267	438	416	1 72	1 85	1 65	1·78				
Nepal	Men	2	2	..	4	2	6	1 04	20·00	..	13·68	1·19	16·28	168	43
	Women	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	12 50				
Madras	Men	2	11	17	34	19	45	3 28	6·29	5 30	10·78	3·37	7·67	623	873
	Women	..	..	2	22	2	22	..	..	1·05	10·37				
Bombay	Men	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	..	..	66 66	..	22 22	11	18
	Women	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	..	..	200 00				
Total	Men	1,285	1,325	1,535	1,827	2,820	3,152	7 18	5·91	3·08	4·17	4·16	4·75	67,844	66 348*
	Women	305	379	962	1,019	1,267	1,398	2 20	2·01	2 26	2 69	2·24	2·47	56,603	56,615*
	Total..	1,590	1,704	2,497	2,846	4,087	4,550	5·00	4·14	2·71	3·48	3·28	3·70	124,448	122,954*

NOTE.—The percentages of deaths and desertions are calculated separately on the figures of each half-year. The mean of the strength at the beginning and end of each such period is taken for this purpose. The sum of these two percentages then forms the percentage of the year's return, and is called the annual percentage (Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department Resolution No. 117, dated the 11th November 1877, paragraph 3, and Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department letter No. 97, dated the 17th May 1880).

* *See* remarks on the statement of mortality according to nationality.

It will be seen that, neglecting the figures for Nepal, Madras, and Bombay, which are too small to give scope for comment, the different classes of coolies display much the same peculiarities in respect of propensity to desertion as in previous years. The Act coolies from the North-Western Provinces, both male and female, are most given to desertion; next come those from Bengal and last those from Chota Nagpur. Among non-Act coolies, too, the same order is noticeable.

All three classes, however, if we take non-Act and Act coolies together, share in the general improvement manifested by the year as a whole. The decrease in desertions among North-Western Provinces coolies, where they have fallen from 7·38 to 5 69 per cent., is peculiarly gratifying.

Desertions by districts.

40. Considered district by district, the incidence of desertions is as shown below:—

Districts.	Total desertions amongst adults 1881.	Total desertions amongst adults 1880.	Act VII. 1881.	Act VII. 1880.	Non-Act. 1881.	Non-Act. 1880.	Percentage of desertions on annual strength among: Act-VII 1881.	Act-VII 1880.	Non-Act. 1881.	Non-Act. 1880.	Total adult population. 1881.	Total adult population. 1880.	Annual strength of total adult population, both Act and non-Act labourers. 1881.	1880.
Sylhet	1,151	1,406	86	169	1,065	1,237	6·21	8 36	7·39	10·76	7·30	10 36	15,775	13,576
Cachar	895	1,524	287	505	608	1,019	5·84	6·76	1·94	3·44	2·46	4 13	36,422	36,906
Kámrúp	33	15	7	.....	26	15	3 61	...	3·34	2·10	3 37	1·57	980	952
Darrang	335	237	122	146	213	91	2·77	2 88	3·57	1·68	3·25	2·27	10,313	10,412
Nowgong	184	209	88	166	96	43	4 01	7·00	4 41	2·71	4 24	5·28	4,336	3,954
Sibságar	783	648	471	364	312	284	5 16	2·95	1 34	1·37	2·41	1·97	32,475	32,849
Lakhimpur	706	511	529	354	177	157	5 53	3·06	1·23	1·23	2 92	2 10	24,142	24,303
Total	4,087	4,550	1,590	1,704	2,497	2,846	5 00	4·14	2 71	3·48	3·28	3 70	124,448	122,954

The above statement shows that the increase of desertions, both actual and proportional, among Act coolies was confined to the districts of Kámrúp (where the number of coolies is insignificant), Sibságar, and Lakhimpur; in all the other districts there was a decrease. It has been already mentioned that, with the exception of Cachar (where, though the proportion of desertions is less than last year, it is still higher than anywhere else except in Sylhet), Sibságar and Lakhimpur are the two districts where contractors are most resorted to for the supply of coolies; and the connection between this mode of recruiting and the prevalence of desertion is thus again illustrated.

Among non-Act labourers, Nowgong, Darrang, and Kámrúp alone show an increase in desertions as compared with 1880; in Sylhet and Cachar there is a very noticeable decrease, and the proportion in Lakhimpur and Sibságar is stationary.

It is curious to observe that, omitting Sylhet, the circumstances of which are peculiar, the three districts where desertion is most prevalent among the Act coolies are exactly those where it is least resorted to by non-Act labourers, *viz.*, Cachar, Sibságar, and Lakhimpur. It may perhaps be concluded that, though these districts, as the most remote in the Province, are least popular among newly-arrived immigrants, labourers once acclimatised find them comfortable places of residence, and are unwilling to leave them.

41. Taking both classes together, Sylhet, as in former years, heads the list in point of prevalence of desertion, though here, too, there is a great improvement compared with 1880. Independence of the restraints of the Act is characteristic of the tea population of that district; escape is easy, and pursuit almost impossible. The extreme cheapness of food makes it a simple thing for the labourer to earn enough to support himself till he reaches his home, and he is thus prepared to take advantage of any pretext for transferring his labour elsewhere In this district, at any rate, desertion is connected neither with mortality nor with liability to sickness. The order of the other districts in point of prevalence of desertion in 1881, calculated upon both classes of adult labourers taken together, is compared below with that of 1880:—

Order of districts in point of prevalence of desertion

	1881.		1880
Sylhet	7 30	Sylhet	10·36
Nowgong	4·24	Nowgong	5·28
Kámrúp	3·37	Cachar	4 13
Darrang	3·25	Darrang	2 27
Lakhimpur	2 92	Lakhimpur	2 10
Cachar	2 46	Sibságar	1·97
Sibsagar	2 41	Kámrúp	1·57

Section IV.—Mortality.

42. The number of deaths in 1881 among all classes of immigrants employed on tea-gardens, including children and infants, was 6,171, against 6,657 in 1880, a decrease of 486, or 7 30 per cent. As the total population among which the mortality occurred was larger than in the previous year, the ratio of deaths was proportionately lower, being only 3·17 per cent., against 3·52 in 1880. This ratio, which is actually less than what is believed to be the ordinary rate of mortality among an Indian population, is among the lowest ever attained, and testifies to the general healthiness of the Province as a place of abode for immigrant labourers. The death-rates of preceding years have been as follows:—

Deaths generally

	Per cent.
1879	5 09
1878	6·61
1877	5 09
1876	5·11

43. The table below gives the details of this mortality comparatively for the two years, and for each half year separately, district by district:—

Deaths by districts

Districts	Deaths amongst all classes of labourers, including children and infants.				Percentages					
					Half yearly				Annual	
	First half year		Second half year		First half		Second half			
	1881.	1880	1881	1880	1881.	1880	1881	1880	1881	1880
Sylhet	183	175	221	235	83	94	·96	1 22	1 79	2 16
Cachar	558	919	709	741	91	1 47	1 13	1 20	2 04	2 67
Kámrúp	21	22	28	36	1 44	1 59	1 86	2 51	3 30	4 10
Darrang	294	282	459	406	2 01	1 98	3 16	2 83	5 17	4 81
Nowgong	136	100	190	182	2 23	1 87	3 02	3 20	5 25	5 07
Sibságar	749	846	1,090	1,182	1 46	1 66	2 11	2 30	3 57	3 96
Lakhimpur	608	705	925	826	1 71	2 00	2 56	2 32	4 27	4 32
Total	2,549	3,049	3,622	3 608	1 32	1 62	1 85	1 90	3 17	3 52

This statement shows that the death-rate fell in every district except Darrang and Nowgong. The low mortality in Sylhet and Cachar is particularly remarkable.

44. The mortality among adults was 4,156, against 4,410 in 1880, the percentage being 3·34 and 3·58 respectively: of this total, 1,994 deaths occurred among Act coolies, giving a percentage of 6·38, against 2,398, with percentage of 5·88, in 1880. There has thus been here a slight falling off, which will be further discussed below. 2,162 deaths were of non-Act adults, against 2,012 in 1880, giving ratios of 2·33 and 2·45 per cent. respectively.

Adult mortality

45. In the table below the adult mortality for both classes together is distributed according to nationality and sex, and shown comparatively for the two years:—

Adult deaths by nationality and sex

Nationality	Sex.	Deaths amongst adults of both classes.		Percentage of deaths to annual strength		Annual strength of adults of both Act and non Act labourers	
		1881.	1880.	1881	1880.	1881.	1880.
Bengal	Men	520	455	2 75	2 34	40,339	42,278
	Women	588	536				
North Western Provinces	Men	582	643	3 72	4 67	25,273	23,243
	Women	358	443				
Chota Nagpur	Men	1,024	1,194	3 57	4 04	58,031	56,492
	Women	1,049	1,085				
Nepal	Men	6	5	3 57	13 95	168	43
	Women	.....	1				
Madras	Men	17	33	4·49	5 27	623	873
	Women	11	13				
Bombay	Men	1	2	9 09	11 11	11	18
	Women	.....	.....				
Total	Men	2,150	2,332	3 17	3 52	67,844	66,343†
	Women	2,006	2,078	3 54	3 67	56,603	56,615†
Grand Total		4,156	4,410	3 34	3 58	124,448	122,954†

† These figures are calculated on the average annual strength of men and women of both Act and non-Act labourers, and do not agree with the total annual strength of males and females of different nationalities

With the exception of labourers from Bengal (among whom, however, the death-rate is conspicuously low) every class shows a great improvement in point of mortality. This is most marked (neglecting the minor Provinces) among immigrants from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, whose death-rate has fallen from 4·67 in 1880 to 3·72 in 1881. The mortality among coolies from Chota Nagpur has also been reduced by one-half per cent. The mortality among the sexes differs but slightly. The trifling excess in the ratio among women is perhaps due to the risks of childbirth.

46. Distributed between Act and non-Act adults, the comparative mortality for the two years is shown in the statement below separately for each district:—

Adult deaths by districts.

District	Number of deaths among adults						Percentages of deaths to annual strength						Annual strength of total adult population both of Act and non Act labourers	
	Act VII		Non Act.		Total		Act VII.		Non Act		Total.			
	1881	1880	1881	1880.	1881.	1880	1881	1880.	1881.	1880	1881	1880	1881.	1880
Sylhet	44	78	223	211	267	289	3 19	3 92	1 54	1 80	1 69	2 13	15,775	13,576
Cachar	186	387	570	510	756	897	3 84	5 24	1 80	1 72	2 07	2 43	36,422	36 906
Kámrup	10	9	25	31	35	40	5 26	3 58	3 13	4 38	3 57	4 20	980	952
Darrang	367	389	212	149	579	538	8 52	7 73	3 55	2 78	5 61	5 17	10,313	10,412
Nowgong	162	172	75	59	237	231	7 52	7 25	3 46	3 72	5 46	5 84	4,336	3,954
Sibsagar	489	603	650	677	1,139	1,280	5 46	4 97	2 76	3 28	3 51	3 89	32,475	32 849
Lakhimpur	736	760	407	375	1,143	1,135	7 73	6 58	2 77	2 93	4 73	4 67	24,142	24,303
Total	1,994	2,398	2,162	2,012	4,156	4,410	6 38	6 88	2 33	2 45	3 34	3 58	124,448	122,954

47. The general ratio for Act adults is, as has been already stated, 6·38 per cent, or ·5 worse than in 1880. The statement shows a remarkable difference between the Brahmaputra and Surma Valleys in respect to this mortality. While in Sylhet and Cachar there has been a great diminution in the number of deaths, and the ratios have fallen from 3·92 and 5 24 per cent., respectively, in 1880, to 3·19 and 3·84 per cent. in 1881, every district in the Assam Valley shows an increase in mortality. In Kámrúp the rate is 5·26, struck on a small number of coolies, but in Darrang, Lakhimpur and Nowgong it exceeds 7 per cent. in each case, and in Sibságar it is, though not excessively high, ·5 per cent. more than in 1880. As will be seen from the details given in Chapter III., the excessive mortality in the upper districts of the Assam Valley is chiefly confined to certain gardens, which will be found named in that portion of the report. In Darrang the excessive mortality was chiefly among coolies from the North-Western Provinces. The deaths from cholera, 44 against 55 in 1880, and from dysentery, 100 against 88 in that year, were slightly greater in

Deaths of Act adults

number, and being applied to a smaller number of immigrants bring out a heavier ratio of mortality. The latter disease is probably connected with defects in the water-supply of the gardens where it was prevalent, as will be seen from the details in Chapter III. Two lamentable accidents, resulting in one case in the drowning of 22 persons, and in another of 7, also swelled the mortality.

48. In Nowgong the heavy mortality was among North-Western Provinces and Bengal coolies, and is attributed to the weakly character of the immigrants, who were supplied by contractors. Here also the excessive mortality is due chiefly to dysentery, and, while the number of deaths is much the same as in 1880, the ratio is increased by the smaller total on which it is calculated. In Lakhimpur there can be no doubt as to the cause of the increase in mortality. The deaths are entered mainly under "other causes," in which term are comprehended anæmia, dropsy, debility, and the like, which are found to be chiefly fatal to sickly and despondent newly-arrived immigrants. In this district and Sibságar there was, as has been pointed out in paragraph 27 above, a largely increased resort to contractors for the supply of immigrants; and in nearly every case in which a garden shows a high mortality, it is alleged to be due to "bad batches" of coolies supplied by contractors. Unfortunately, however, these complaints were not brought forward when the batches were received, and enquiry into their condition and history could be made. In one or two cases the Chief Commissioner has directed further investigation, but in most it is impossible to expect at this date any satisfactory result. Similar complaints have been noticed in former Immigration Reports, and in paragraph 3 of that for 1879 Sir Steuart Bayley pointed out that under the law, as it then stood, the remedy lay chiefly in the hands of the Calcutta Agents, who select the coolies in the contractors' depôts. Under the new Act a change has been advisedly made by the legislature in the definition of the responsibility of the Medical Inspectors who pass coolies previous to shipment, and are empowered to detain them on the road. These are no longer directed by law, as before, to certify the coolie's *fitness to labour*, but merely his *fitness to travel*. The Chief Commissioner regrets the change in the law, which he considers to have been a mistaken one, and which did not come to his notice while the Bill was under consideration; and he has directed the Medical Officer at Dhubri as far as possible to overlook it, and to certify to the "fitness to travel" with an eye to the work to be performed when the traveller reaches his destination. It is almost impossible for tea-planters to exercise any control over contractors, otherwise than by refusing to deal again with a firm which sends up bad batches, and by combining together to "boycott" such firms; and, whatever the new Act may say, the Chief Commissioner doubts whether, unless there is distinct proof of carelessness or neglect of warnings, the importation of unhealthy coolies can fairly be held to be evidence of (Section 130) "the want of due care or precaution" on the part of the owner or employer, though the consequences of any such mortality may be the closing of the garden under Section 132 as unfit for the residence of labourers.

to what due in Nowgong, Lakhimpur and Sibságar

On every ground, therefore, whether of humanity or policy, it behoves employers to consider strictly the expediency of resorting to contractors, as the tendency has latterly been, in preference to garden-sardars, for the engagement of their immigrants; and, if they decide to use the former agency, to look closely, either in person or by their agents, to the selection of the coolies to be imported.

49. Among non-Act adults every district except Cachar and Darrang shows an improvement; and although the former has a higher death-rate than in 1880, the rate is still the lowest but one (as last year it was the lowest) in the Province. The mortality of this class is nowhere excessive, and the ratio for the whole of Assam is probably lower than the normal death-rate among the people.

Deaths of non Act adults

50. In last year's report (paragraph 52) a statement was given comparing the order in which the several districts stood with reference to the total adult mortality, and that in which they stood with reference to the proportion borne by newly-imported coolies to the total labour force.

Order of districts as to mortality and proportion of new coolies

The corresponding figures for 1881 are given below:—

Order in respect of mortality of adults.		Order in respect of proportion of new to old labourers	
Darrang	5·61	Nowgong	14·24
Nowgong	5·46	Lakhimpur	12·53
Lakhimpur	4 73	Kámrúp	9·91
Kámrúp	3·57	Darrang	9·28
Sibságar	3·51	Sibsagar	7·84
Cachar	2·07	Sylhet	6·96
Sylhet	1·69	Cachar	4·40

A certain correspondence between the two lists is observable; and it is, of course, a truism to say that the risks of life in Assam are greater in the case of unacclimatised than in that of acclimatised labourers.

Causes of death among adults.

51. The two statements given below show the causes of death among Act and non-Act adults district by district :—

Causes of death among labourers engaged under Act VII.

District.	Mean strength of Act VII labourers employed in 1881.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6.			Annual per centage of deaths.
	First half	Second half	Cholera.	Dysentery.	Jungle fever.	Other causes	First half.	Second half	Total	
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8
Sylhet	1,488	1,328	5	14	10	15	14	30	44	3·19
Cachar	5,489	4,431	20	51	39	76	79	107	186	3·84
Kámrup	214	181	4	2	.....	4	3	7	10	5 26
Darrang	4,624	4,144	44	100	29	194	130	237	367	8 52
Nowgong	2,285	2,090	9	42	12	99	54	108	162	7·52
Sibságar	9,918	8,401	56	150	39	244	192	297	489	5 46
Lakhimpur	10,206	9,073	58	135	65	478	299	437	736	7·73
Total	34,226	29,649	196	494	194	1,110	771	1,223	1,994	5·38

Causes of death among non-Act labourers.

Districts	Mean strength of non-Act labourers employed in 1881.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6.			Annual per-centage of deaths.
	First half.	Second half	Cholera.	Dysentery	Jungle fever.	Other causes	First half.	Second half.	Total.	
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8
Sylhet	13,998	14,736	17	52	45	109	103	120	223	1 54
Cachar	30,711	32,213	81	132	116	241	225	345	570	1·80
Kámrup	756	810	1	3	3	18	6	19	25	3·13
Darrang	5,808	6,050	23	56	12	121	77	135	212	3·55
Nowgong	2,009	2,290	5	10	16	44	31	44	75	3 46
Sibságar	22,609	24,023	65	140	68	377	271	379	650	2 76
Lakhimpur	13,784	15,222	51	54	54	248	156	251	407	2 77
Total	89,676	95,347	243	447	314	1,158	869	1,293	2,162	2·33

Cholera was much less fatal in 1881 than in 1880, only 196 deaths among Act coolies and 243 among non-Act coolies being due to this cause in the former, against 408 and 370 respectively in the latter. The mortality from dysentery was also less, but still heavy; that from fever was about the same.

The following statement shows the general rate of mortality among adult labourers during the last five years :—

Year.	Average number of labourers, both Act and Non-Act	Total number of deaths among both Act and Non Act adults	Percentage of deaths among adult labourers.
1880	122,954	4,410	3·58
1879	123,799	6,695	5·40
1878	110,476	8,072	6·75
1877	105,317	5,298	5·03
1876	112,612	4,951	4·39

Generally favourable character of the year

52. The general rate of mortality among adults is the lowest of the five years from 1877 to 1881. The year was, like its predecessor, undistinguished by any severe epidemic outbreak, and the healthiness of the season is borne witness to by the statistics of the jails in the Province. Besides this, however, there can be no doubt that the improvements in sanitation which have been carried out by the planters have contributed much to the reduction in mortality. The low prices of the year, especially in the Surma Valley, must also have

enabled the labourers to live better than they have sometimes found it possible to do. But, however caused, the improvement is a subject for congratulation; and the Chief Commissioner hopes that, with more careful selection of the labourers recruited, and with greater attention to the judicious dieting of immigrants from the North-Western Provinces during the first months of their residence in the Province, future years may show little or no retrogression as compared with that just closed.

Mortality of Children and Infants.

Child mortality.

53. The number of children between two and sixteen years of age at the beginning of the year was 43,517, on the 1st July 45,248, and on the 31st December 44,882. The mean strength of the first half-year was thus 44,382, and that of the second 45,065. During the first half-year 380 children died, and in the second 429. The ratio for the first was thus ·85 per cent., and for the second ·95, giving an annual rate of 1·80. In 1880 the ratio was 2·26, and in 1879 3·22. The past year was thus a singularly healthy one for children. It is probable that the diminished importations of children, of whom less by 248 entered the Province than in 1880, had something to do with this improvement.

Distributed by causes and by districts

54. The table below shows the causes of death among children in the several districts of the Province:—

District	Mean strength of children in 1881		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6			Annual percentage of deaths.	
	First half	Second half	Cholera	Dysentery	Jungle fever	Other causes	First half	Second half	Total	1881	1880.
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8	9
Sylhet	4,257	4,488	9	5	17	10	21	20	41	·93	1 66
Cachar	19,656	19,640	14	23	23	76	82	54	136	·68	1 55
Kámrup	361	400	1	1	2	2	6	.....	6	1 66	1·50
Darrang	2,215	2,261	6	15	9	62	40	52	92	4 11	3 40
Nowgong	1,223	1,275	1	13	10	33	38	19	57	4 59	2 16
Sibsagar	9,859	10,102	19	68	52	122	109	152	261	2 60	2 99
Lakhimpur	6,811	6,896	9	47	45	115	84	132	216	3 14	3 30
Total	44,382	45,065	59	172	158	420	380	429	809	1·80	2 26

Darrang, Nowgong, and Lakhimpur, among children as among adults, show the heaviest mortality; and the low ratio for the Province is principally due to the extremely small mortality in the Surma Valley.

Infant mortality

55. A similar improvement is found in the death-rate among infants. There were at the beginning of the year 23,765 infants under two years of age, on the 1st July 24,830, and on the 31st December 26,612. The mean for the first half year was 24,297, and for the second 25,721. 529 deaths occurred in the first half and 677 in the second, giving a percentage of 2·17 for the former and 2·63 for the latter, or an annual rate of 4 80. In 1880 the percentage was 5 57, and in 1879 6·79. Here also the falling off in importations, which were 256 fewer than in the previous year, may account for part of the decrease in mortality.

56. The statement below shows the distribution of deaths among infants district by district:—

Distributed by causes and districts

Districts.	Mean strength of infants in 1881.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6			Annual percentage of deaths.	
	First half.	Second half.	Cholera.	Dysentery	Jungle fever	Other causes.	First half.	Second half	Total.	1881.	1880.
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8	9
Sylhet	2 224	2,469	3*	12	20	61	45	51	96	4 08	3 35
Cachar	5,668	6,321	7	64	113	191	172	203	375	6 24	8·52
Kámrúp	126	115	...	.....	.....	8	6	2	8	6 50	10 34
Darrang	1,987	2,060	3	14	.....	65	47	35	82	4·05	4 32
Nowgong	565	629	...	4	.....	28	18	19	32	5 32	5 73
Sibságar	8,955	9,169	3	67	95	274	177	262	439	4 82	5 24
Lakhimpur	4,770	4,956	3	30	35	106	69	105	174	3 56	3 93
Total	24,297	25,721	19	191	263	733	529	677	1,206	4 80	5 57

* This figure will not of course agree with the result of adding to the figures of the 1st January the number of infants imported and born, and deducting the deaths since beside deaths we must also deduct those who, reaching the age of 2 passed over into the class of 'children'—if the returns are correct these were 3,606 in number

Every district except Sylhet shows an improvement as compared with 1880.

Unhealthy Gardens.

Gardens with a mortality over 7 per cent.

57. The number of gardens on which a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. occurred has risen from 48 in 1880 to 60 in 1881. The increase is entirely confined to the Brahmaputra Valley, where it occurs in the districts of Darrang, Nowgong, and Sibságar. The details of the several districts are shown below:—

District.	Number of unhealthy gardens 1881.	1880
Sylhet	1	...
Cachar	1	2
Kámrup	...	...
Darrang	21	10
Nowgong	10	5
Sibságar	12	9
Lakhimpur	15	22
Total	60	48

Many of these, however, owe their position in the list to the small number of coolies employed, among whom a few deaths sufficed to produce a heavy percentage of mortality. The details of each district will be examined in Chapter III. Of the 48 unhealthy gardens of 1880, 16 are included in the statement for 1881, *viz.*, 1 in Cachar, 5 in Darrang, 4 in Nowgong, 2 in Sibságar, and 4 in Lakhimpur.

Section V.—Births.

Number of births.

58. The number of women of all classes at the commencement of the year was 56,311, and on the 1st July 57,165; the mean strength for the first half year was thus 56,738. On the 31st December the number was 55,776; the mean for the second half was thus 56,170. The yearly mean, being the mean of the two half years, was 56,604. The total number of births was 7,122, which gives a rate of 12·58 births per 100 women. In 1880 the percentage was 10·43, and in 1879 8·82. This increase is probably in part due to better reporting, but so far as it is real it is a matter for congratulation.

Births to total immigrant population.

59. The immigrant population is not of course under altogether normal conditions; the number of women to men is disproportionately small, being only 45·3 out of every 100 adults, instead of 50: the number of children, that is, persons under 16 years of age, is 35·9 per cent. of the total population, while the provincial average recorded at the recent Census is 43 per cent.† On the other hand, the experience of the English colonies leads to the inference that where the proportion of women is deficient, the births are not diminished in a corresponding degree. The birth-rate on the total number of immigrants, is still considerably below what it should be, being only 36·6 per mille, against a probable normal rate of 45 per mille in an Indian population. The rate in 1880 was 31·3, in 1879 27·0, in 1878 31·9, and in 1877 33·8. The table below compares the years 1880 and 1881 district by district and shows an improvement in every case except in Kámrúp, where the numbers are insignificant:—

District.	Annual strength		Number of births		Percentage.	
	1881.	1880	1881.	1880.	1881.	1880.
Sylhet	22,494	18,920	955	557	4·24	2·94
Cachar	62,065	61,805	2,615	2,111	4 21	3·41
Kamrúp	1,482	1,406	38	53	2 56	3·76
Darrang	14,575	14,307	404	392	2 77	2·74
Nowgong	6,184	5,506	177	145	2·86	2·63
Sibságar	51,519	51,632	1,870	1,659	3·63	3·21
Lakhimpur	35,860	35,418	1,063	987	2·96	2·78
Total	194,181	188,497	7,122	5,904	3·66	3·13

* This figure differs from that given in paragraph 66 of last year's report, 55,664, owing to the inclusion in it of returns from certain gardens in Sylhet which last year submitted none.

† The divisions of age entered in the Census tables do not give the exact number of persons under 16: but out of a total population in the plains districts of 4,507,619, 1,872,238, or 41·5 per cent., were entered as under 15, and 342,556 as between 15 and 20; one-fifth of the latter is 68,715, which, added to the number under 15, gives 1,940,949. In the three other provinces of which the Census Reports have as yet been published the proportion of children under 15 is as follows:—

Burmah	40·44 per cent.
Berar	37·82 „ „
Rajputana	35·70 „ „

In England and Wales the proportion is 36·1 so that the large excess over this ratio in Assam and Burmah points to great fecundity combined with a low average duration of life.

Births according to nationality.

60. The following statement shows the proportion of births to women by nationality in the different districts of the Province:—

Districts.	Bengal			North West Provinces.			Chota Nagpur			Nepal			Madras			Bombay			Total		
	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII or otherwise	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII. or otherwise	Births.	Percentage	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII. or otherwise	Births.	Percentage	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII. or otherwise	Births.	Percentage	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII or otherwise	Births.	Percentage	Annual strength of women employed under Act VII or otherwise †	Births.	Percentage.
Sylhet	2,372	290	12 22	3 810	457	13 81	1 682	203	12 07	4			58	5	8 62	2			7,43	955	12 85
Cachar	7,067	1,217	17 22	4,256	818	19 22	5,177	562	10 85				34	18	52 94				16,587	2,615	15 81
Kámrúp	304	14	4 60	8	1	12 50	152	23	15 13										486	38	8 15
Darrang	2,091	145	6 93	723	48	6 95	2 072	215	10 38	2			2	1	50 00				4 894	404	8·26
Nowgong	605	28	4 63	90	10	11 11	1,305	139	10·65		..		5	..					2 007	177	8 82
Sibságar	4 472	509	11 38	2 115	242	11 44	8,807	1 108	18 74	8	3	37 50	72	8	11 11				14 977	1,870	12 48
Lakhimpur	2 045	138	6 75	646	57	8 82	7,521	862	11 46	2		.	68	6	8 82				10 289	1,063	10 33
Total	18,960	2,341	12 35	11,153	1,628	14 60	26,223	3,112	11 87	18	3	16 66	245	38	15 51	2	.		56,804	7,122	12.58

† The figures in this column are calculated on the average annual strength of both Act and non Act women, and do not agree exactly with the totals of women of different nationalities in each district

It will be seen that, as in last year, Cachar shows the highest recorded birth-rate, 15·81, against 12·28 in 1880. The Sylhet rate is notably higher than in 1880, 12·85 against 8 75. The rate in Sibságar has also risen from 10 88 to 12·48.

Taken according to nationality, the following statement shows the comparative fecundity of the different classes in the two years 1881 and 1880:—

	Births to 100 women	
	1881	1880
Nepalese	16 66	20·00
Madrasis	15·51	6·68
Women from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	14·60	10 76
Bengalis	12·35	9 87
Chota Nagpuris	11·87	10 77

Omitting the Nepalese, whose numbers are too few to support any conclusions, it will be seen that the order of the different classes in 1881 in respect of prolificness was almost exactly the reverse of that in which they stood in 1880. If, however, the results of the two years be added together, and the average struck, the percentages in those of Madrasis, Bengalis, and Chota Nagpuris approximate closely, being in each case a little more than 11 per cent., while the rate for North-Western Provinces women is 12·68.

CHAPTER III.—District Details.

Details dealt with in this Chapter.

61. As was explained last year, the bulk of the information which in former reports was contained in this chapter has now been distributed in Chapter II., the details under each head for the several districts being taken, as the more convenient arrangement, in immediate conjunction with the general statistics of the Province. In this portion of the report therefore it only remains to notice the gardens which in each district showed a mortality exceeding 7 per cent.

Unhealthy gardens in Sylhet

62. *Sylhet.*—No garden in this district in 1880 showed a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. In 1881, however, there was one such garden, Olivia Cherra, the details of which are given below:—

Mean strength.		Deaths			Percentage.		
First half year	Second half year	First half	Second half.	Total	First half	Second half	Total
150	155	3	12	15	2·00	7 74	9·74

Of this garden the Deputy-Commissioner writes—

"Of the 15 deaths 1 was from old age, 1 by drowning, 2 from sunstroke, 5 from dysentery, 2 from debility, and four from other causes. No deaths appear to be due to cholera or jungle fever. This garden was inspected once in the course of the year; I visited it myself in February 1882."

From the above, it would seem that four of the deaths were from causes not due to the unhealthiness of the garden.

In Cachar.

63. *Cachar.*—This district had two specially unhealthy gardens last year,—Páthicherra and Mulidhar. On the former the death-rate was 16 72 per cent., and on the latter 7·86 per cent During 1881 there was only one garden in the district where more than 7 per cent. of the labourers died,

viz., Páthicherra, and here the rate was this year only 7·80 per cent. On Mulidhar the death-rate fell to 3·92 per cent., exactly one-half of that of 1880. Of Páthicherra the Deputy-Commissioner writes—

"On this garden in 1880 there were 60 deaths, showing a percentage of 16·70. The causes of death were as follows:—

17	from	cholera.
17	„	dysentery.
1	„	fever.
1	„	dropsy.
24	„	other causes.
60	Total.	

Of these 60 deaths 17 occurred among children and 43 among adults. Of the latter, 36 were among labourers from the North-Western Provinces alone. In respect to this garden a Committee sat in November 1880, and, they having been of opinion that the garden was particularly unhealthy for North-Western Provinces men, it was closed to this class of labourers. The Committee also suggested several sanitary improvements. The effect of these beneficial measures was observed in 1881, in which year there were 39 deaths, and the death-rate fell to 7·80."

This garden has already been twice visited within the last year, and will continue to be kept under special observation.

In Kámrúp; 64. *Kámrúp* had no specially unhealthy gardens in 1881.

In Darrang; 65. *Darrang.*—The number of unhealthy gardens largely increased. In 1880 it had been 10, in 1881 it was 21; of the 21, 5 appeared in last year's list. The following are the statistics of these gardens:—

Name of gardens.	Mean strength.		Deaths.			Percentages.		
	First half year.	Second half-year.	First half year.	Second half-year.	Total.	First half year.	Second half-year.	Annual.
Kandarbíl	50	64	7	6	13	14·0	9·37	23·37
Sopai	56	39	4	6	10	7·14	15·38	22·52
Mornoi	86	82	...	17	17	...	20·73	20·73
Thekrábári	40	20	2	3	5	5·0	15·0	20·0
Májbát	11	10	1	1	2	9·09	10·0	19·09
Shákomotha	135	133	8	12	20	5·92	9·02	14·94
Sella	103	103	7	8	15	6·79	7·77	14·56
Singrimári	147	120	4	11	15	2·72	9·16	11·88
Gronland	521	582	26	31	57	4·99	5·32	10·31
Kumárjáu	126	133	7	6	13	5·55	4·51	10·06
Borpukri	129	119	9	3	12	6·97	2·52	9·49
Behári.....	627	633	23	36	59	3·66	5·68	9·34
Bishnath	11	12	1	...	1	9·09	...	9·09
Bámgáon	405	382	6	27	33	1·48	7·06	8·54
Dharamjuli	38	33	2	1	3	5·26	3·03	8·29
Rontholi.....	91	81	3	4	7	3·29	4·93	8 22
Borkola	136	156	5	7	12	3·67	4·48	8·15
Pánbári	141	133	6	5	11	4·25	3·76	8·01
Bholábári	149	137	4	7	11	2·68	5·10	7·78
Káupáti	69	68	2	3	5	2·89	4·41	7·30
Kellaigáon	247	254	7	11	18	2·83	4·33	7·16

Of these, the following were on the unhealthy list last year:—

	Percentages.	
	1881.	1880.
Májbát	19·09	10·34
Shákomotha	14·94	22·27
Dharamjuli	8·29	7·21
Pánbári	8·01	10·35
Káupáti	7·30	10·15

Májbát, as will be seen from the more detailed statement, had but 11 coolies, among whom two deaths occurred, one in each half of the year. Dharamjuli also had a very small number, 38 and 33, in the two half years respectively, among whom 3 deaths brought out a percentage of 8·29. On Káupáti also the number of coolies, 69 and 68, was small, and the deaths only 5 in number. There remain Shákomotha and Pánbári, with an excessive mortality on a labour force respectively of 135—133 and 141—133.

The former of these gardens was under observation throughout the year; it was inspected in the beginning of March 1881, and again on the 22nd June of the same year, by the Civil Surgeon. On both occasions he condemned the position of the lines and the water-supply. A new site for the lines was chosen in March, but had not been occupied in June; and the manager was warned by the Deputy-Commissioner that if the suggestions of the Inspector were not carried out it would be necessary to summon a Committee under Section 118 of the Act. The garden was again inspected in February 1882, when it was found that the coolies had been removed to the new lines in October and November; since when the sickness had greatly decreased. The need of a good well was again insisted on, and the manager promised to have one made at once. The garden is still under observation, and was again inspected in April last.

Pánbári is a garden which has appeared in three successive years with a heavy mortality. The following were the rates:—

1879	25·31	per cent.
1880	10·35	„
1881	8·01	„

The garden was specially inspected at the close of 1879, and a series of sanitary improvements ordered, which have been carried out. The coolies, whose health had suffered from the influences which previously prevailed, did not, as was natural, at once shake off their effects, and the mortality is still high; but it has much improved since 1879, and the Deputy-Commissioner hopes that the present year will show a further advance.

Of the remaining 16 gardens which appear for the first time in the list for 1881, the excessively high rates in Kandarbíl, Sopai, and Thekrabári are in each case struck on a small number of coolies. On the first, the mortality occurred entirely among a batch of newly-imported coolies. "This garden," writes the Assistant-Inspector, "has been hitherto one of the healthiest in the district; for the last two years hardly a coolie has died. I cannot therefore put down the recent heavy mortality to the climate of the garden. The coolies must have arrived with the germs of disease half developed in them." The garden has been placed under observation, and the Civil Surgeon directed to inspect it. Of Thekrábári it is said that "the arrangements on the estate appear to be excellent." Sopai is a new garden, on which imported labour was employed for the first time. The coolies imported were mostly from the North-Western Provinces, and were unsuited to a newly opened garden. From the remarks of the Assistant-Inspector, it is gathered that, though the garden is close to Mangaldai, where there is an excellent bázár, the health of the coolies was not consulted by the supply to them of a special diet suited to their wants. The Deputy-Commissioner has ordered all the sickly coolies to be removed to the head factory, and a special report to be made of the state of the labourers at an early date.

On Mornoi all the deaths, 17 in number, occurred during the second half of the year: of these 9 were due to cholera, 1 to dysentery, and 7 to diarrhœa. This garden was to have been visited in April last, and the Deputy-Commissioner promised then to consider whether it would not be necessary to close it to imported labour.

Sella (death-rate 14·56) was inspected by the Civil Surgeon in February 1882, when the situation of the lines and the water-supply were found to be bad. A new site will be selected.

The deaths on Singrimári were all among non-Act coolies: 7 were due to dysentery, and most of the remainder to an accident,—the upsetting of a boat,—by which a number of coolies were drowned.

Gronland is a garden which in previous years was excessively unhealthy, but improved much in 1879 and 1880. 23 of the 56 deaths occurred among one gang of coolies who arrived on the garden on the 1st March 1881. The deaths were all of North-Western Provinces coolies, and were chiefly due to choleraic diarrhœa. The mortality is ascribed to the coolies not being acclimatised, and to the use of the water of a dirty stream which runs through the lines, in preference to that of a well which exists, and gives good water. Another well has been directed to be dug, and the Deputy-Commissioner will be requested to consider whether this garden should not be closed to importations from the North-Western Provinces.

Kumárján is said to have been until recently very healthy; a new manager has been appointed, and the Assistant-Inspector thinks that under his superintendence the garden will recover its reputation.

Borpukri.—Here the unhealthiness of the garden is believed to have been temporary, and during the eight months previous to the last inspection, in February 1882, there had been only two deaths.

At Behári (which for the first time appears in the unhealthy list) the lines are said to be badly situated, and the water to be bad. The majority of the deaths were of children, and the cause choleraic diarrhœa. It is stated that no improvements suggested themselves as possible to the inspecting officer; there was no good site for lines on the estate, and no place where wells could be dug with a prospect of their being used by the coolies. The garden was inspected by the Civil Surgeon in June 1881, and by the Deputy-Commissioner on the 1st January 1882, and will remain under observation in 1882.

The case of Bishnáth, where 1 death occurred among 11 coolies, needs no remark. The Bámgáon garden is said to be one of the healthiest in the district: 22 of the deaths during the second half-year were due to the accidental upsetting of a boat while crossing the river Mansiri.

Rontholi was unhealthy in 1879, though not so in 1880. The mortality is ascribed to a bad water-supply, for the remedying of which directions have issued. At Borkolá the

arrangements appeared on inspection to be satisfactory. At Bholábári the water was condemned.

At Kelláigáon everything was reported on inspection to be in good order.

66. Generally speaking, defective water-supply, badly-placed lines, and the introduction of unacclimatised coolies from the North-Western Provinces are the causes to which the heavy mortality on most of these gardens was due. The Deputy-Commissioner has been requested to arrange for their careful and frequent inspection, and the correction of all defects which it is possible to amend, and to consider whether it will not be desirable to close some of them to newly-imported coolies from the North-Western Provinces.

in Nowgong.

67. *Nowgong.*—In this district there were in 1880 five gardens with a mortality exceeding 7 per cent., *viz.* :—

Anjukpáni	29·96
Rongamati	17·72
Sonajuri	13·43
Nonai	12·35
Borghát	7·04

This rate has since been corrected by the Deputy-Commissioner to 19 64, 7 deaths, not 4, as reported, having occurred on the garden.

The first four of these gardens reappear in the unhealthy list for the present year, and six new gardens are also included therein, making ten in all. The following is the list :—

Name of garden	Average strength		Mortality.			Percentage		
	1st half	2nd half.	1st half	2nd half.	Total.	1st half.	2nd half.	Total.
Hátibandha	27	49	3	9	12	11 11	18 36	29·47
Chápánalla	39	40	...	6	6	.....	15 00	15 00
Báhkusi	28	27	2	2	4	7 14	7 40	14 54
Nonai	160	158	12	5	17	7 50	3 16	10 66
Háspáni	238	274	10	17	27	4 20	6 20	10 40
Rangahgarh	56	50	1	4	5	1 78	8 00	9 78
Nowpáni	80	96	3	5	8	3 75	5 20	8 95
Anjukpáni	64	78	2	4	6	3 12	5 12	8·24
Sonájuri	33	40	...	3	3	.....	7 50	7 50
Rongamati	128	114	5	4	9	3 90	3 50	7 40

It will be seen that the four gardens which were in the unhealthy list last year have greatly improved, with the exception of Nonai, where the decrease in the mortality is comparatively small. On Nonai and Rongamati the deaths are attributed to the importation of unhealthy coolies in 1880.

On Hátibandha also the deaths are said to have been of newly-imported labourers, who arrived in a sickly state, and died within a few months of their arrival.

The Deputy-Commissioner gives no particulars regarding the other gardens, several of which, owing to a mistake of calculation, he did not include in the list originally submitted. It is gathered, however, that in most cases dysentery and fever were the causes of death, and that the victims were newly-imported, and chiefly contractors' coolies The inspecting officers have been directed to visit these gardens twice during the ensuing cold season, and to submit a special report on the mortality, giving details of adults, children, and infants, of nationality, and of recruitment, in the case of all deaths during the past and the present years. All defects in the gardens are to be specially enquired into, and it will be considered whether any of them should be closed to any particular class of immigrants.

in Sibságar;

68. *Sibságar.*—Nine gardens in this district had a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. in 1880: for 1881 the list includes twelve, only two of which, Bándasália and Gabruparbat, were in last year's list. The following are the details of deaths in these gardens:—

Name of garden.	Mean strength.		Deaths			Percentages		
	First half year.	Second half year.	First half year	Second half-year	Total.	First half year	Second half year.	Total
Hantley	34	50	.....	7	7	.....	14 00	14 00
Dumer Dallang	145	157	1	16	17	·68	10·19	10 87
Hingrajáu	52	48	3	2	5	5 76	4 16	9 92
Bándasália	143	138	3	10	13	2 09	7 24	9 33
Abhaypur	207	202	8	11	19	3 86	5 44	9 30
Kohapáni	105	93	4	4	8	3 80	4 30	8 10
Gabruparbat	453	461	19	17	36	4 19	3 68	7 87
Mahakati	191	172	5	9	14	2 61	5 23	7 84
Atkiel	590	574	13	31	44	2 20	5 40	7 60
Missamára	505	532	19	20	39	3 76	3 75	7 51
Bengnakhoa	174	174	1	12	13	·57	6 89	7 46
Hálmira	329	324	15	8	23	4 55	2 46	7 01

The highest death-rate here shown, 14 per cent., in Hantley, is calculated on a small number of coolies. One of the seven deaths was of a child three weeks old, and one was from sunstroke: of the remainder three were from dysentery, and two from "debility."

In Dumer Dallang the mortality was chiefly of infants, 10 of the 17 deaths being of children under two years of age. The Civil Surgeon inspected the garden on the 13th April last, but the result of his inspection is not stated. Bándasália was inspected by the Deputy-Commissioner on the 9th February last, and again by the Civil Surgeon on the 29th April. The death-rate has fallen from 10·33 in 1880 to 9·33 in 1881. The causes of the 13 deaths were as follows:—

4 syphilis and debility.	1 pneumonia.
2 dysentery.	1 parturition.
2 diarrhœa.	1 amputation of leg.
1 dropsy.	1 (a dependant 60 years of age) debility.

The proprietor explained that "at the beginning and end of 1880 two batches of contractors' coolies were procured from Calcutta, as the garden-sardars had failed to recruit coolies in 1879. These coolies were of a most inferior and worthless class, and performed little or no work, though they were fed by the concern, and received considerable advances for *khuraki*. Several absconded in 1880 and 1881, and several turned out to be diseased with syphilis, and affected other coolies; hence the mortality from this cause." The Civil Surgeon would deduct the cases of syphilis (4), parturition (1), and amputation (1), and the death of the old dependant over 60, seven in all, from the tale of deaths due to local causes. If this were done, the rate of mortality would sink to 4·28 per cent.

The death-rates in Abhaypur, Hingrajáu, Mahakati, and Atkiel, which had not yet been visited by the Civil Surgeon when the report was written, are not explained.

Koliapáni was inspected by the Civil Surgeon on the 30th April. Of the 8 deaths 3 were of infants, due to infantile diarrhœa, and 3, of adults, were due to cholera; the remainder were from dysentery. Gabruparbat is a garden belonging to the Assam Company, and was inspected on the 14th December last. The death-rate has fallen from 9·53 per cent. in 1880 to 7·87 in 1881. The garden is under the direct supervision of an experienced European medical officer; the lines have been removed to a healthier site, and the water-supply, which was indifferent, has been improved by the digging of new wells.

At Missamára (which was inspected by the Civil Surgeon in April last) 21 of the 39 deaths were of infants and children; 10 were due to measles, 5 to infantile diseases, 2 to croup, 14 to fever, 4 to dysentery, 2 to bronchitis, 1 to cholera, and 1 to debility.

At Bengnakhoa also (which was likewise inspected by the Civil Surgeon in April last) 6 of the 13 deaths were of infants; 5 deaths occurred among time-expired coolies not actually living on the garden, but in houses of their own in the neighbourhood.

Halmira was inspected by the Civil Surgeon in April last. He found that 4 of the deaths were due to cholera, 1 was of a sardar who died in Calcutta while recruiting, and 10 were of infants, 2 of whom died owing to the death of their mothers from cholera.

On the whole, considering the large number of gardens in this district, the tale of unhealthy gardens is not excessive; and in most cases the mortality is explained as not due solely to local causes.

69. In *Lakhimpur* there were last year 22 gardens with a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. The number has this year fallen to 15, of which only 4 appeared in last year's list. The rates exhibited by these four in the two years are shown below:—

In Lakhimpur;

	1881.	1880.
Hukanpukri	10·54	11·60
Romaria	8·87	8·95
Timóna	7·52	11·29
Kadam	7·27	12·08

In the last two, it will be seen, there has been great improvement, in the first two less.

The following is a list of the gardens found to be unhealthy in 1881:—

Name of garden	Mean strength		Deaths.			Percentages.		
	First half year.	Second half year.	First half year	Second half year	Total.	First half year.	Second half year	Total
Deohal	17	50	2	3	5	11 76	6 00	17 76
Jaipur, P W	14	8	.....	1	1	.. ...	12 50	12 50
Hukanpukri	243	251	14	12	26	5 76	4 78	10 54
Diglaiting	67	66	5	2	7	7 46	3 03	10 49
Hilaidari	250	238	14	11	25	5 60	4 62	10 22
Bakal M T Co	75	68	1	6	7	1 33	8 82	10 15
Dibrugarh, P W	70	68	5	2	7	7 11	2 94	10 08
Balijan	242	229	13	10	23	5 37	4 36	9 73
Romaria	605	590	25	28	53	4 13	4 74	8 87
Kehung	286	294	11	13	24	3 84	4 42	8 26
Romai	203	209	8	9	17	3 94	4 30	8 24
Hingrajan	133	149	3	8	11	2 25	5 36	7 61
Tinona	94	109	2	6	8	2 02	5 50	7 52
Hilika	2,687	2,948	84	128	212	3·12	4 34	7 46
Kadam	165	165	2	10	12	1 21	6 06	7 27

Two of the institutions shown as gardens are, it will be seen, the labour lines of the Provincial Public Works Department at Dibrugarh and Jaipur, where imported coolies were employed. The highest rate but one is entered against the Public Works Department lines at Jaipur, but is due to only one death.

As regards the 13 gardens, the Inspector has submitted explanations from the managers of 7, and the Chief Commissioner recently ordered a special inspection of all to be made by the Civil Surgeon. The reports on 7 (4 of them identical with those the managers of which have submitted explanations) have been received, but not those on the remainder. It is thus possible to give some account of the mortality on 10 of the 13. The district report is again extremely defective, and the Chief Commissioner only refrains from calling for an entirely fresh report because of the delay which would be thus caused.

At Deohál, which heads the list, the 5 deaths occurred among a very small coolie population, thus causing a high percentage. They were all among depôt (*i.e.*, contractors') coolies imported in 1881, and are attributed to their inexperience and filthy habits. Hukanpukri was visited by the Civil Surgeon on the 5th May last, who stated that there was no fault to be found with the lines or the water-supply. Only two deaths had occurred since the 1st January last (one a chronic case of dropsy, and the other an infant), and the majority of the coolies were healthy: here also the importation of sickly depôt coolies is the alleged cause of the mortality.

The deaths at Diglaiting (7 upon a mean strength of 66·5) were caused by dysentery, attributed by the manager to a too free consumption by the coolies of raw cucumbers.

No particulars have been received regarding the mortality at Bakal; the number of deaths, 7, occurred in a small population, averaging 71·5.

Hilaidari was inspected in May last, when it was found that only one death, of an infant, had occurred since the 1st January. Of the 25 which occurred in 1881, 6 were of infants, 3 of children, and 16 of adults. The deaths of the infants are attributed to the difficulty of inducing their mothers to bring them for medical treatment until it is too late to apply it. Of the 3 children 1 died from measles, of which there was an epidemic in the neighbourhood. Of the adults, 3 died of cholera, 6 of dropsy, 3 of chronic diarrhœa and dysentery, 2 of remittant fever, 1 of sloughing ulcer, and 1 of hysteria. The manager states that nearly all except the cholera cases were of long standing, and that the coolies were sickly and unfit for work from their arrival. The lines and water-supply are described as excellent, and the diet supplied to the sick as all that could be desired.

Balijan was inspected by the Civil Surgeon on the 29th May, and it had been previously inspected by the Assistant-Commissioner. Only one death had occurred since the 1st January. Of the 23 deaths, 2 were of coolies who never reached the garden, but died in the Dibrugarh dispensary shortly after arrival, 3 were of women in childbirth, one of whom had been prematurely confined on board the steamer on the journey up, and 2 were of infants whose mothers did not bring them for treatment. The deaths here also are said by Dr. Partridge to have been nearly all "among an exceptionally bad batch of coolies from a depôt."

Regarding Romaria, the Chief Commissioner has received no information.

Kehung was inspected on the 29th May, and the lines reported to be well built, clean, and well drained. There are two good wells, but the coolies cannot be prevented from using dirty river water. The Inspector suggested that another well should be dug near

the lines. The mortality on this estate apparently continues high, since there had been in the five months since the 1st January 7 deaths. The manager writes:—

"The coolies had, with one exception, been supplied from contractors' depôts in Calcutta, and, in spite of every effort to feed them well, and give light task work for them to do, would persist in getting sick and eventually dying."

Romai was inspected on the 12th June. The lines were clean and well kept, and the water-supply, a well with a pump, good. The Inspector writes:—

"The majority of deaths occurred in a bad batch of Hazáribágh coolies: many of them deserted and were recaptured; and the hardships they endured while they were away, added to their previous ill-health, would account for their subsequent illness and death."

Timona was inspected on the 7th June last. Only one death had occurred since the 1st January. The lines are well situated, and there is a good well: but as the lines are surrounded on all but one side by the river, it is difficult to prevent the use of the river-water. Here also "bad batches of depôt coolies" are alleged as accounting for the mortality.

At Hingrajan the manager is unable to account for the mortality except by "the particularly unhealthy weather prevailing in the neighbourhood, especially about September."

Hilika is by far the largest tea estate in the district. The manager states that the mortality "was due to the very large importation of new coolies during the year." The garden was specially inspected on the 4th May. The new coolies were almost all supplied by contractors, and the Civil Surgeon, who saw and inspected those remaining of the importations, write that they "were without exception a most wretched lot, all ill with various diseases due to debility." The number of deaths since the 1st January had been 38 among Act coolies, and 14 amongst free labourers. The garden is supervised by a European Surgeon

No report has been received regarding the mortality in Kadam.

70. From the above, it will be seen that there is a striking uniformity in the ascription of the mortality, where it has occurred, to the importation of weak and sickly coolies from contractors' depôts. The history of two such importations (one of which was sent to the Hilika factory, where a large number of coolies were released from contract as unfit for labour almost immediately after arrival) is being investigated under the Chief Commissioner's orders, with a view to fix the responsibility upon those who passed them before despatch to the tea districts. But Mr Elliott can only repeat what has already been said in paragraph 48 above, that the new Act leaves the responsibility for the selection of fit persons for residence and labour in the Province to the manager who imports them, and that the consequences of a high mortality can only be avoided by the employment of garden-sardars with a direction to obtain a medical certificate under Section 70, or by careful selection of the coolies in the contractors' depôts before despatch.

Special inspection of unhealthy gardens ordered

71. General orders were issued upon the report for 1880 that all gardens shown therein as having suffered from a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. should be inspected at least twice during the ensuing cold season; and when, in the course of his tour last spring, the Chief Commissioner visited the Sibságar and Lakhimpur districts, he directed that the Civil Surgeon should specially visit and report upon all gardens which, upon the returns of 1881, showed a mortality over 7 per cent. and that their reports should be embodied in that for the district He will now issue general instructions in this sense to all districts, and hopes next year to be able to give a more complete account of all exceptional mortality.

Cause of inaccuracy in return of unhealthy gardens

72. There is one cause of inaccuracy in the returns of deaths which was detected by the Chief Commissioner during his tour in the Assam Valley last cold weather, and has since been found by him to prevail also in Cachar. Sick and sometimes moribund coolies are occasionally sent in from tea-gardens for treatment in the dispensary at the head-quarters station, and if they die there their deaths are not always entered in the garden returns. Thus at Dibrugarh Mr. Elliott found that out of 60 tea-coolies who had died in the dispensary during 1881, 36 had been entered in the death returns of the gardens to which they belonged, while 24 had not been entered; out of 22 gardens to which the deceased coolies belonged, three failed to enter some, and eight entered none, of these deaths in the garden returns Such an omission, though the numbers are too small to affect the general death-rate of the district, must tend to show an unduly favourable result for the year in the case of the gardens which omitted to enter the deaths: and a circular was therefore issued on the 5th June last, requesting Deputy-Commissioners to inform the managers of all tea-gardens that they are bound to record in the returns submitted by them the deaths of all their labourers, whether they die in the garden or on the way to the dispensary,

or at the dispensary. The Deputy-Commissioners were also directed to see that a list is prepared in the dispensaries, showing the name of each tea-garden coolie who has died there during the year, and the garden from which he came, and that this list is carefully compared with the garden returns before the annual report is written and the statement of gardens with a high mortality drawn up.

CHAPTER IV.—General Remarks.

Opening of new gardens.

73. The statement below shows the number of new gardens opened and old gardens closed during the year 1881:—

Districts	New gardens opened in		Old gardens closed in		Remarks
	1881	1881	1881	1880	
Sylhet	1	6	...	...	One garden amalgamated during 1881.
Cachar	...	3	3	2	
Kámrup	...	...	...	...	
Darrang	1	4	3	2	
Nowgong	...	..	6	7	One garden amalgamated.
Sibságar	2	22	11	...	Seven gardens not under culture.
Lakhimpur	...	6	2	...	
Total	4	41	25	11	

It will be seen that the number of gardens closed has more than doubled as compared with 1880, while the new gardens opened were only 4, against 41 in the previous year. This is the natural result of the depression which so severely affected the industry, and made further extensions rash. Notwithstanding this, however, the yield of tea during the year has been very much in excess of any total heretofore attained. The district returns show a total for the Province of 37½ million pounds, while the estimate of the brokers, which is doubtless prepared on more complete information, gives a crop for the year of 38,293,748 lbs. The returns of Joint Stock Companies prepared by the Registrar in Calcutta are incomplete, since many of the companies entered therein do not show the results of the working of 1881. Of those that do, 41 Companies in all, 24 made a profit of 5·2 per cent. on their capital, 14 a loss of 6·2 per cent., and 3 made neither a gain nor a loss. Many of the most extensive and most prosperous Companies, however, are registered in England, and do not appear in the returns.

Offences committed by labourers

74. The statement of offences committed by labourers given below relates only to those on contract under Act VII. of 1873. It is extremely imperfect, being in most districts prepared from the returns submitted by the garden managers, whereas it should have been constructed from the records of the courts :—

District.	Desertion.	Rioting.	Theft.	Assault.	Culpable homicide.	Counterfeiting.	House-trespass.	Breach of contract.	Unlawful assembly.	Causing hurt.	Attempting to commit suicide.	Other offences.	Total.
Sylhet	7	...	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	..	7
Cachar	25	....	2	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1	30
Kámrup	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Darrang	29	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	30
Nowgong	25	1	1	1	...	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	29
Sibsagar	33	12	2	....	....	....	....	2	....	....	....	....	49
Lakhimpur	31	....	....	....	2	....	....	1	....	....	....	3	37
Total	150	13	6	2	2	....	....	3	....	....	2	4	182

It is only necessary to turn to the Jail Report of the year to find proof therein of the inaccuracy of this statement. That report shows 295 persons in jail during 1881 for offences under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 alone, or nearly double the number shown above. Some of these were doubtless cases of admission during 1880, which remained over during 1881, but it is very improbable that this explains the whole difference. The Police report also shows 264 cases under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873, and 884 cases under Act XIII. of 1859, instituted and taken up by Magistrates during 1881. In the former 287 persons were convicted, out of 314 who appeared before the Court; in the latter 940, out of 1,119 who appeared. District Officers will be requested in future to arrange for the compilation of the information necessary for this statement in their judicial offices. The Chief Commissioner has also, in his Resolution on the new Act, I. of 1882, published

in February last, directed that in each case under the Act precise details should be given of the section under which the offence was charged.

Treatment of cases of desertion.

75. He has also in the same Resolution called for full particulars in regard to cases of desertion, and directed that future reports should show how many labourers have deserted and been arrested with warrants, and how many without warrants, who have been brought to the police-stations and had their cases legally enquired into. An attempt was made to obtain this information during the past year, but without any satisfactory results. The reports from Sylhet, Cachar, and Nowgong alone furnish the particulars required, and that in a very imperfect way. In Sylhet the Deputy-Commissioner reports that no deserters were recaptured without being brought to trial, while 33 persons escaped recapture; yet he shows only 7 convictions for desertion, and 86 Act adults who deserted. The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar has received no returns on the subject from 22 gardens. Those submitted show 67 deserters recaptured and prosecuted, 85 recaptured and not prosecuted, and 724 who escaped recapture: 209 remain unaccounted for. In Nowgong it is said that 3 deserters only were recaptured, but not put on trial, while 85 escaped recapture (meaning apparently Act-VII. coolies, among whom the desertions were 88); yet the statistics for the district show 25 punishments for desertion. The attempt to obtain these particulars has thus so far been a failure. Under the new Act, and with revised rules regarding the particulars to be entered in the annual report, the Chief Commissioner hopes for better results.

Criminality of the coolie population

76. As respects the general criminality of the coolie population, it must be admitted that this class compares unfavourably with the natives of the Province. 672 of the convicts admitted to jail during the year, or 19 per cent. of the total admissions, were tea coolies, of whom 325 were imprisoned under the labour laws,—Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873, and Act XIII. of 1859. The balance, 347, represents other and more serious crime. As the number of adult tea coolies is about 120,000, this gives nearly three prisoners to every thousand of the population, the provincial average being only about one in a thousand.

Determination of contract under Section 112 of Act VII (B C) of 1873

77. The number of immigrants whose contracts were determined under Section 112 of Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873, by reason of permanent unfitness for labour, was 363, against 137 in 1880. No cases under this section occurred in Sylhet. The numbers in the other districts were as shown below :—

Cachar ...	...	...	...	...	16
Kamrúp	...	...	...	...	1
Darrang	...	...	...	...	30
Nowgong	...	...	...	...	8
Sibsagar	...	...	...	...	13
Lakhimpur	...	...	...	...	295
		Total	...	...	363

Of those released from contract in Lakhimpur, no less than 236 were coolies on the tea estates of Mr. Gordon Shaw,—Hilika, Talup, and Hukanjuri. The maximum amount of 3 months' pay was awarded to most of the coolies released from contract; but in 17 cases in Lakhimpur only 1 month's pay appears to have been given, in 50 cases 1½ month's pay, and in 2 cases 2 month's pay. Enquiry will be made into the circumstances under which these amounts were awarded. On this subject, the Deputy-Commissioner of Darrang remarks as follows :—

"In each case the men received Rs. 15 and the women Rs. 12. In all the above cases the coolies were put on board the steamer by the Inspector or Assistant Inspector, and placed in charge of the commander of the vessel, to whom the sums awarded on discharge were handed over, with instructions that, after deducting their passage and diet money, the balance, together with the coolies, was to be made over to the Embarkation Agent at Goalundo. Intimation concerning the return of such emigrants was always sent both to the Embarkation Agent at Goalundo and Emigration Agent at Calcutta, so as to facilitate the return of the emigrant to his home. I find, on a reference to the Emigration Report of this district for 1878, that my predecessor drew attention to the allowance above alluded to as being inadequate, the more so in the case of females, as they only receive Rs. 12, and from this sum has to be deducted the emigrant's passage and mess expenses on the way down, so that a very small sum remains unexpended when the coolie arrives at Goalundo. I regret to find that the new Act also only makes mention of three months' pay. If this were to be the limit in addition to cost of carriage, there would be no objection, but as it is I fancy very few of the coolies thus discharged ever reach their homes."

The Chief Commissioner drew the attention of the Legislative Department to this subject while the Bill was under consideration, desiring that a higher maximum should be fixed, but without effect. He will now consider whether part of the expense of conveying immigrants discharged under Section 122 of Act I. of 1882 to their homes should not be borne by the Labour Transport Fund.

Settlement of immigrant labourers as cultivators

78. The table below contains the statistics rendered by the District Officers of the area of land taken up by immigrant labourers for cultivation. It is not complete, as it fails to show the cases in which the coolie settles as a tenant, and not as an independent cultivator. In Cachar there must be many such cases; the great falling off in this district is difficult to explain. In the Assam Valley, it will be seen, there is in every district except Sibságar and Kámrúp a considerable increase in the area taken up:—

	1881 Acres.	1880 Acres	1879 Acres
Sylhet	72	.....	.....
Cachar	3	1,467	1,033
Kamrúp	56	56	.....
Darrang	1,535	1,254	756
Nowgong	128	77	37
Sibsagar	448	990	832
Lakhimpur	972	739	.....
Total ...	3,214	4,583	2,658

Average earnings of labourers

79. The information supplied by the district reports in regard to the average monthly earnings of the coolies is neither complete nor satisfactory. In Lakhimpur the average is given as Rs. 5 a month for men and Rs. 4 for women, which are merely the contract rates entered in their agreements; what is required is the actual average, as ascertained by inspection of the pay-lists. In Nowgong the average for men is stated at Rs. 4-12, and for women at Rs. 4. In Sylhet a general average rate of Rs. 4-4-6 is returned; but the Deputy-Commissioner notes that—

"This result is arrived at by taking an average of the earnings reported as the ordinary earnings on each of 32 gardens. Inspecting officers are very careless about returning this important fact, and often exclude the sick and malingerers. Seven gardens, however, employing 1,735 labourers, have returned figures of the amount spent in wages. This comes to Rs. 5,952 a month, or Rs. 3-6-11 a head, a figure which is much nearer the probable truth."

The Chief Commissioner will endeavour to obtain more accurate statistics on this important subject in future.

Sanitary measures on tea gardens

80. No special reference is made to the subject of sanitary improvements, or the dieting of labourers, in the reports received from the labour districts. As regards the former, however, the reports of the officers who have inspected gardens where excessive mortality occurred show that even in these there is usually little fault to find with the arrangement of the lines or the water-supply; and it may be presumed from the fact that the year was marked by the lowest rate of mortality among the total immigrant population which has ever been attained that the progress of improvement in the sanitary conditions of the immigrants has been steady. Mr. Elliott in the course of his tours has frequently had occasion to notice the excellent arrangements made on tea-gardens for the maintenance of health among the labouring population; and he gladly bears testimony to the general kindness and consideration evinced by the planters in their dealings with their coolies, whether adults or children. The construction of wells has been actively carried on, to the great improvement of the water-supply; the hospitals are well managed, and are generally in charge of qualified Native Doctors; and the diet given in them to the sick is good and suitable. In all these measures of sanitary improvement the advice and personal inspection of the late and present Sanitary Commissioners, Drs. DeRenzy and J. J. Clarke, have been of the greatest benefit to the planters.

The new Act did not come into force till after the close of the year, and thus no measures could be taken to provide for the compulsory rationing of newly-arrived coolies, from which much benefit is anticipated in acclimatising them gradually to the conditions of life in Assam.

Conclusion

81. Upon the whole, the Chief Commissioner considers that the results of the year may generally be regarded as satisfactory. The tea industry appears to be recovering from its recent depression; the importation of coolies has increased, and the outturn of tea has been much larger than in any previous year. The health of the imported labourers has been remarkably good, the death-rate among them being considerably lower than that of an Indian population under normal conditions. The births have increased, and exceed the deaths; the desertions show a considerable diminution in number. No serious causes of difference

have arisen between the labourers and their employers during the year. And the new Act, with the improvements it has effected in the system of supervising the treatment of the immigrant labourers in the Province, and the greatly increased inducements which it offers to recruitment by means of garden-sardars, will, it is confidently anticipated, prove of great benefit both to the labourer and his employer.

RETURNS.

Return showing the Statistics for the Total Immigrant Population of the Province of Assam during the year 1881.

1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
Classes of Labourers.		Number remaining at the end of last year, 1880	Additions made during the year 1881.				Total of columns 2 and 6.	Deductions made during the year 1881.						Number remaining at the end of the year 1881.	Strength on the 1st July 1881.	Percentage of deaths to annual strength.	Percentage of desertions to annual strength.	Annual strength.	
			Imported.	Received from other gardens.	Otherwise added.	Total added.		Died.		Deserted.		Otherwise deducted.	Total deducted.					First half.	Second half.
								First half.	Second half.	First half.	Second half.								
Sylhet	Act-VII labourers (adults)	1,711	809	7	20	836	2,547	14	30	34	52	1,026	1,156	1,391	1,266	3·19	6·21	1 488	1,338
	Non-Act labourers .. Adults	13,204	845	1,601	5,553	7,999	21,203	103	120	464	601	5,254	6,522	14,681	14,792	1·64	7 39	13,998	14 736
	Non-Act labourers .. Children	4,628	178	367	1 019	1,564	5,592	21	20	92	88	880	1,101	4,491	4 486	·93	4 13	4,237	4,488
	Non-Act labourers .. Infants	2,144	23	82	1.141	1,246	3,390	45	51	38	33	589	756	2,634	2,305	4·08	3·05	2,224	2,469
	Total	21,687	1,855	2,057	7 733	11,645	32 732	183	221	628	774	7,729	9,535	23,197	22,849	1 79	4 22	21,968	23,021
Cachar	Act-VII. labourers (adults)	6,525	1,986	117	58	2 161	8,686	79	107	147	140	3,803	4,276	4,410	4,453	3·64	5·84	5,489	4,431
	Non-Act labourers .. Adults	29,266	454	593	16,413	17,460	46,726	225	345	404	204	13,277	14,455	32,271	32,156	1·80	1·94	30,711	32,213
	Non-Act labourers .. Children	19,490	262	120	3,419	3,791	23 181	82	54	59	36	3 491	3,722	19,459	19,822	·68	·48	19 656	19,640
	Non-Act labourers .. Infants	5,433	75	101	3,707	3,883	9,316	172	203	52	43	2,107	2,577	6,739	5,908	6·24	1 60	5,668	6,321
	Total	60,714	2,767	931	23,497	27,195	87,909	558	709	662	423	22,678	25,030	62,879	62,334	2·04	1·74	61,524	62,606
Kámrup	Act-VII. labourers (adults)	238	33	5	....	38	276	3	7	3	4	87	104	172	190	5·26	3·61	214	181
	Non Act labourers .. Adults	680	90	13	181	284	964	6	19	15	11	125	176	788	838	3 13	3 34	756	810
	Non Act labourers .. Children	331	46	6	65	117	448	6	...	8	2	23	39	409	391	1·66	2·72	361	400
	Non Act labourers .. Infants	136	7	....	26	33	169	6	2	3	....	44	55	114	117	6 50	2·88	126	115
	Total	1.385	176	24	272	472	1,857	21	28	29	17	279	374	1,483	1,531	3·30	3 12	1,468	1,507
Darrang	Act-VII. labourers (adults)	4,687	1,227	124	67	1,418	6,105	130	237	68	54	1,890	2,379	3,726	4,563	8 52	2·77	4,624	4,144
	Non-Act labourers .. Adults	5 499	96	255	2,291	2,642	8 141	77	135	76	157	1,732	2,157	5,984	6,117	3·55	3 57	5,808	6,050
	Non-Act labourers .. Children	2,114	228	76	337	641	2,755	40	52	2	22	431	548	2,207	2,316	4 11	1 11	2 215	2,261
	Non-Act labourers .. Infants	1,944	105	27	463	600	2,544	47	35	7	....	365	454	2,090	2,030	4·05	·35	1,987	2,060
	Total	14,244	1,656	482	3,163	5,301	19 545	294	459	154	213	4,418	5,538	14.007	15,025	5·17	2·52	14 634	14,516
Nowgong	Act-VII. labourers (adults)	2,292*	822	97	39	958	3,250	54	108	50	38	1,098	1,348	1 902	2 279	7·52	4·01	2,285	2,090
	Non-Act labourers .. Adults	1 715	97	65	1,323	1,485	3,200	31	44	36	60	751	922	2,278	2,303	3 46	4·41	2,009	2,290
	Non-Act labourers .. Children	1,148	175	29	199	403	1,551	38	19	....	1	240	298	1 253	1,298	4 59	·08	1,223	1,275
	Non-Act labourers .. Infants	513	72	6	200	278	791	13	19	....	....	118	150	641	618	5·32	....	565	629
	Total	5,668	1 166	197	1,761	3,124	8,792	136	190	86	99	2,207	2,718	6,074	6,498	5·25	2·98	6,083	6,286
Sibságar	Act-VII. labourers (adults)	11 118	3,157	359	104	3,620	14,738	192	297	246	225	5,695	6 655	8,033	8,719	5 46	5 16	9,918	8,401
	Non-Act labourers . Adults	21,268	479	758	8,626	9,823	31.091	271	379	168	144	6,034	6 996	24,095	23 951	2·76	1 34	22 609	24 023
	Non-Act labourers . Children	9 685	533	139	1,618	2 290	11.975	159	152	12	8	1,523	1,804	10,171	10,034	2 60	·20	9,859	10 102
	Non-Act labourers . Infants	8 919	169	99	2,076	2,344	11,263	177	262	7	7	1,464	1,917	9,346	8,992	4·62	·16	8,955	9,169
	Total	50,990	4,298	1,355	12,424	18,077	69,067	749	1,090	433	384	14,716	17,372	51,695	51,696	3 57	1·48	51,343	51,695
Lakhimpur	Act-VII. labourers (adults)	10,840	4,139	424	74	4,637	15,477	299	437	250	279	5,639	6,904	8,573	9,577	7 73	5·33	10,206	9,073
	Non-Act labourers . Adults	12 702	354	342	6,960	7 656	20,359	156	251	99	78	4,195	4 779	15,580	14,865	2·77	1·23	13,784	15,222
	Non-Act labourers . Children	6,721	569	126	899	1,594	8,315	84	132	19	14	1,174	1,423	6,892	6 901	3 14	·48	6,811	6,596
	Non-Act labourers . Infants	4,676	126	125	1,201	1,462 •	6,138	69	105	9	5	902	1,090	5,048	4,865	3·56	·29	4,770	4,956
	Total	34 [illegible]	5,198	1,017	9,134	15,349	50,289	608	925	377	376	11,910	14,196	36,093	36,204	4·27	2·10	35,572	36,148
	Act VII. labourers (adults)	37 411	12,173	1,133	362	13,668	51,079	771	1,223	798	792	19,233	22,823	28,257	31 042	6·35	5·00	34,226	29,649
	Non-Act labourers .. Adults	84,335	2,375	3 627	41,347	47,349	131 684	669	1,293	1,262	1,235	31.348	36,007	95 677	95 017	2 83	2 71	89,676	95,347
	Non-Act labourers .. Children	43,517	1,981	863	7,476	10,300	53 817	380	429	193	171	7 762	8,935	44,882	45,248	1·80	·81	44,382	45,065
	Non-Act labourers .. Infants	23 765	587	449	8,819	9 846	33,611	529	677	116	88	5,589	6,999	26,612	24,830	4·80	·82	24,297	9,25,721
	Grand Total	189,828	17,116	6,08[illegible]	57,284	81,163	270,191	2,549	3,622	2,369	2,286	63,937	74,763	195,428	196,137	3 17	2·40	192,582	195,762

The discrepancy with column 12 of last year's return is owing some tea gardens in Sylhet, which did not submit returns last year, having submitted returns this year.

Deputy Commissioner of Nowgong reports that the increase of six coolies above the number shown in column 12 of last year's return is due to the manager of New Solana, who corrected his figures for 1880.

Return of Imported Labourers on Contracts under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873, for the year ending 31st December 1881.

Sex.	Locality of Birthplace.	Number remaining on the books at the end of last year, 1880.	Number placed on the books during the year 1881.					Total added during the year, or total of columns 4 to 8.	Total number of labourers, or total of columns 3 and 9.	Number removed from the books during the year 1881.									Total deducted during the year 1881, or total of columns 11 to 18.	Number remaining on the books at the end of the year 1881.	Strength on the 1st July 1881.	Annual strength.		Percentage of deaths to annual strength.	Percentage of desertions to annual strength.
			Imported.		Received from other gardens.	Returned from imprisonment.	Apprehended as deserters.			Transferred to other gardens.	By permanent unfitness under Section 112.	By determination of contract under Section 136.	By redemption under Section 137.	By cancelment under Sections 135 and 124.	Died.		Imprisoned.	Deserted.					First half.	Second half.		
			By contractors.	By garden-sardars.																						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		17	18		19	20	21	22		23	24
Men	(1) Bengal	4,259*	958	609	144	17	18	1,746	6,005	145	56	1,763	3	3	82	138	22	144	131	2,487	3,518	3,810	4,034	3,664	5·79	7·14
	(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	3,475	1,162	918	108	64	32	2,284	5,759	110	127	1,659	12	....	100	190	66	223	217	2,704	3,055	3,045	3,260	3,050	9·29	13·35
	(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	12,587	1,201	2,431	397	82	75	4,186	16,773	399	57	5,883	8	7	218	399	69	285	281	7,546	9,227	10,593	11,590	9,910	5·30	5·30
	(4) Nepal	7	388	.....	....	....	....	388	395	....	2	8	....	....	....	5	....	....	2	17	378	9	8	193	2·59	1·04
	(5) Madras	89	44	.....	5	2	....	51	140	5	2	82	....	....	2	7	2	1	1	102	38	64	76	51	16·35	3·28
	(6) Bombay	....	.....	32	....	1	....	33	33	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	1	32	....	....	16	.....	.....
	Total	20,417	3,753	3,990	654	166	125	8,688	29,105	659	244	9,395	23	10	402	679	160	653	652	12,857	16,248	17,521	18,969	16,884	6·14	7·18
Women	(1) Bengal	4,377	757	515	117	6	14	1,409	5,686	120	50	1,866	5	....	71	115	6	37	51	2,321	3,365	3,551	3,914	3,458	5·13	2·41
	(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	2,559	387	558	102	8	6	1,061	3,620	104	32	1,541	3	....	49	102	7	37	41	1,716	1,904	2,016	2,287	1,960	7·34	3·71
	(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	10,105	601	1,567	259	12	25	2,464	12,569	257	36	4,848	9	6	248	326	9	71	68	5,878	6,691	7,912	9,008	7,301	7·21	1·72
	(4) Nepal	....	26	.....	....	....	....	26	26	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	25	2	1	13	.....	.....
	(5) Madras	53	19	.....	1	....	....	20	73	1	....	46	....	....	1	1	....	....	....	49	24	40	46	32	5·29	.....
	(6) Bombay	....	.....	.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	.....	.....
	Total	16,994	1,790	2,640	479	26	45	4,980	21,974	482	119	8,101	17	6	369	544	22	145	160	9,965	12,009	13,521	15,257	12,765	6·68	2·20
	Grand Total	37,411*	5,543	6,630	1,133	192	170	13,668	51,079	1,141	363	17,496	40	16	771	1,223	182	798	792	22,822	28,257	31,042	34,226	29,649	6·38	5·00

* The Deputy-Commissioner of Sylhet states that in the previous return two Bengal men were erroneously shown by the manager of Nuncherra as men from Chota Nagpur. This mistake has been corrected this year.
† The Deputy-Commissioner of Nowgong reports that the increase of 6 coolies above the number shown in column 20 of the last year's return is due to the manager of New Salona, who corrected his figures for 1880.

Return No. 26 of 1881.

Return of Imported Labourers not on Contracts under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 for the year ending the 31st December 1881.

Age.	Sex	Locality of Birthplace.	Number remaining at the end of last year, 1880.	Additions during the year 1881.						Total of columns 4 and 10.	Deductions during the year 1881							Number remaining at the end of year 1881.	Strength on the 1st July 1881	Annual strength		Percentage of deaths to annual strength	Percentage of desertions to annual strength.
				Imported direct	Otherwise than by importation.			By transfer to adults from minors and to minors from infants.	Total added during the year 1881, or total of columns 5 to 9		Transferred to other gardens	Left the garden with permission	Left the garden without permission		Died		By transfer from minors to adults and from infants to minors	Total deducted during the year 1881, or total of columns 12 to 16			First half	Second half.		
					Received from other gardens	Re-engaged on expiry of contract	Otherwise obtained						First half.	Second half.	First half	Second half.								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		15		16	17	18	19	20		21	22
Adults	Men	(1) Bengal	17,439	223	661	3,542	1,756	331	6,513	23,952	392	5,265	226	234	127	173	....	6,517	17,435	17,623	17,531	17,529	1·71	2·62
		(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	9,751	738	755	3,818	1,503	293	7,107	16,858	277	4,837	256	310	116	176	....	5,472	11,386	11,365	10,508	11,373	2·64	5 14
		(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	17,440	288	662	8,700	2,166	461	12,277	29,717	488	5,569	280	212	199	263	....	7,016	22 701	22 047	19,743	22,374	2·21	2 37
		(4) Nepal	19	177	....	4	15	....	196	215	....	97	....	....	....	1	....	98	117	23	21	70	1 46	.....
		(5) Madras	366	....	8	82	8	....	98	464	5	164	11	6	3	5	....	194	270	312	339	291	2·60	5 30
		(6) Bombay	3	....	....	.. .	....	....	....	3	....	1	....	....	1	. ..	. .	2	1	2	2	1	50·00	..
		Total	45,018	1,426	2,086	16,147	5,447	1,085	26,191	71,209	1,162	15,533	773	762	446	623	...	19,299	51,910	51,873	48,195	51,641	2 14	·08

	Women	(1) Bengal	15,307	239	524	3,515	1,305	300	5,883	21,190	842	5,041	173	134	161	241	..	6,093	15,097	15 347	15,327	15,222	2 6	2·0
		(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	8,201	402	525	2,889	1 323	251	5,390	13.591	242	3,561	173	181	79	128	....	4,364	9,227	9,345	8,773	9,236	2·28	1·92
		(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	15,568	291	483	6.668	1,941	410	9,793	25,361	363	4,976	143	156	178	297	....	6,113	19 248	18,730	17,149	18,989	2·59	1·65
		(4) Nepal	6	16	....	....	8	...	24	30	....	9	....	....	....	..	....	9	21	9	7	15		.....
		(5) Madras	233	1	9	54	4	....	68	301	7	111	....	2	5	4	....	129	172	211	222	191	4 34	1 05
		(6) Bombay	2	....	....	..	...	....	....	2	....	....	....	....	...	....	....	...	2	2	2	2	....	...
		Total	39,317	949	1,541	13,126	4,581	961	21,158	60,475	955	13,698	489	473	423	670	..	16,708	43,767	43,644	41,480	43,705	2 55	2·26
		Total Adults	84,335	2,375	3,627	29,273	10,028	2,046	47 349	131,684	2,117	29,231	1,262	1,235	869	1,293	....	36,007	95,677	96,017	89,678	95,347	2 33	2·71
Minors under 16 years, excluding infants under 2 years	Boys		24,755	1,145	496	1,281	1 375	1,423	5,723	30,478	812	2,050	114	101	215	250	11 085	5,077	25,451	25,726	25,240	25,588	1·63	·84
	Girls		18,762	836	367	903	1,080	1,386	4,577	23,339	213	2,241	79	70	165	179	961	3,908	19,431	19,52.	19,142	19,476	1 78	·77
		Total	43,517	1,981	863	2,192	2,455	2,809	10,300	53.817	525	5,191	193	171	380	429	2,046	8,985	44,882	45,248	44,382	45,06o	1·60	·81
		Grand Total	127,852	4,356	4,490	31,465	12,483	4 855	57,649	185 501	2,642	34.422	1,455	1,406	1,249	1,722	2,046	44,992	140,559	140,26o	134.058	40 412	2 16	2·09

The discrepancy of column 3 with column 18 of the previous year's return is due to Sylhet, where some tea-gardens which did not submit returns last year have submitted returns this year.